

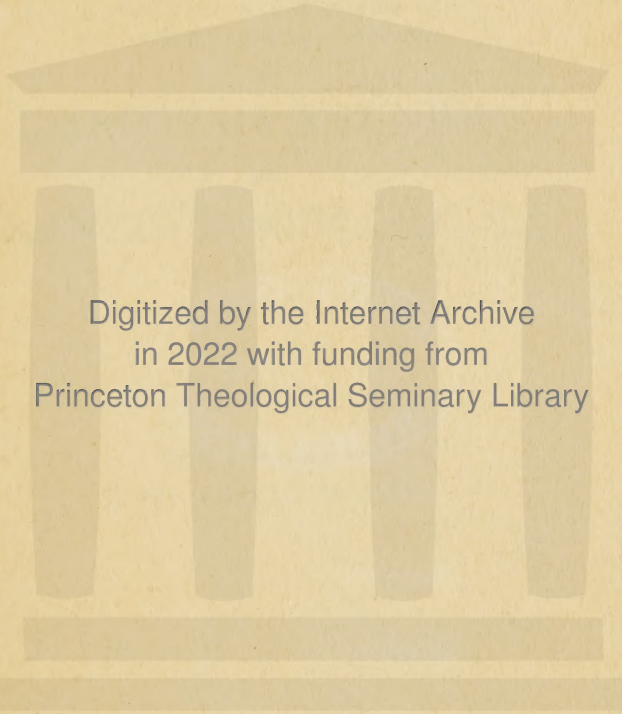
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MODERNISM

AND

THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

THREE FARM STREET LECTURES :

TO WHICH IS ADDED A CHAPTER ON
THE PROBLEM AND THE PROSPECTS

OF

CHRISTIAN REUNION

BY

FRANCIS WOODLOCK, S.J.

WITH A PREFACE BY

G. K. CHESTERTON

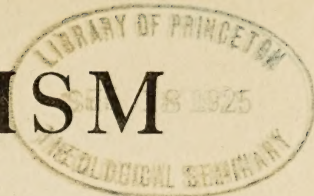
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THE WORD OF GOD

δεῖν γὰρ περὶ αὐτὰ ἐν γέ τι τούτων διαπράξασθαι, ἢ μαθεῖν ὅπῃ ἔχει ἢ εὐρεῖν, ἢ, εἰ ταῦτα ἀδύνατον, τὸν γοῦν βέλτιστον τῶν ἀνθρωπίνων λόγων λαβόντα καὶ δυσεξελεγκτότατον, ἐπὶ τούτου ὀχούμενον, ὥσπερ ἐπὶ σχεδίας, κινδυνεύοντα διαπλεῦσαι τὸν βίον, εἰ μὴ τις δύναιτο ἀσφαλέστερον καὶ ἀκινδυνότερον ἐπὶ βεβαιότερου ὀχήματος ἢ Λόγου Θεοῦ τινὸς διαπορευθῆναι.—Plato's "Phædo," 85.

καὶ Ὁ Λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο, καὶ ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν, καὶ ἐθεασάμεθα τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ, δόξαν ὡς μονογενοῦς παρὰ Πατρός, πλήρης χάριτος καὶ ἀληθείας.—(St. John i.)

"Either he should discover or be taught the truth about these questions: or if this is impossible, I would have him take the best and most irrefragable of human theories, and let this be the raft upon which he sails through life, not without risk, as I admit, unless he can find some WORD OF GOD which will more surely and safely carry him."—Plato's "Phædo," 85 (Jowett's Translation).

"And THE WORD was made flesh and dwelt amongst us, and we saw His glory, as it were of the Only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and TRUTH."—(S. John i.).

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PREFACE

MODERNISM is no longer even modern. That is, it is no longer a thing that can be recommended to thoughtless people, like a fashion, merely because of its modernity; which means merely its novelty. It has passed into the more dangerous phase in which it has a hold not as a fashion but as a prejudice. When a doubt or fear or abnormal notion of any sort is really new, a few hunters of novelty may run after it, but the great mass of the people, living by religion and tradition as do all popular things, instinctively feel it to be alien and perverse. A much more serious war must be waged against it when it is already old enough to have a sort of tradition of its own. How much harder it has been to root out an inhuman Calvinism from countries like Scotland than it would have been to pluck it up when all humanity instantly felt it to be inhuman. Modernism, unlike Calvinism, is not yet old enough to be a tradition. But it is already a convention. It is, after an atmospheric fashion, an assumption. It is that quite unreasonable assumption that Father Woodlock here sets out to attack with reason, before it shall have become, at least in some provincial patches, a deep and tangled growth like the Puritanical tradition. For instance, Father Woodlock points out with great force and clearness the fact that the dates of the Four Gospels were dragged down to the very latest period by the Modernist of the nineteenth century, and are now being pushed back, rather timidly and unobtrusively, to the original orthodox period even by the Modernist of the twentieth century. Mr. H. G. Wells is something more than a Modernist and less than a Christian; I mean that he would hardly claim the name of Christian for his

genuine and unquestionable reverence for Christ. In that, perhaps, he sets a good example to some of the Modernists. But anyhow, his general attitude is that of the ordinary agnostic ; yet Mr. H. G. Wells, in his " Outline of History," frequently admitted that we might accept the Gospels as following very soon upon the events they described. That is what even Modernism says, in so far as it is a thing of science, of study, of history. But that is not what Modernism says, in so far as it is already a thing of assumption, of atmosphere, of routine. In short, that is what it says, but it is not what it has taught people to say. The world is still swarming with young people who have a vague idea the Fourth Gospel has almost, somehow or other, been shown to be a forgery. They have been taught to think that this was proved ; and they still think so, even while their own teachers are disproving it.

So it is with that general question of miracles, which is offered by those who pride themselves rather priggishly on the abstract spirituality of their theism, but whose argument Father Woodlock (to my great joy) describes as " Anthropomorphism gone wild." It is always gratifying to see such philosophers meet with an accusation so truly annoying to them. I am no authority on such things ; but to me personally it has always seemed that people really denied the freedom of God to work miracles because they denied the freedom of Man to want miracles. Their whole argument assumes that God is dealing with a machine ; and our whole argument rests on the idea that in making man God made something more than a machine. Modernism is the enemy of many things, but the thing of which it always seems to me the mortal enemy is liberty. Here again there is a certain parallel between the case of Calvinism and the case of Modernism ; though Calvinism was an attempt to turn the creed into pure pessimism and the other tends rather to a sort of illogical optimism. But both think in terms of what modern people call " conditions," the materials out of which a soul is manufactured, entirely as a passive thing. The one thing they

leave out of every discussion is the will. And the new heretics really disparage the efficacy of divine miracles as the old heretics disparaged the efficacy of good works, because they are connected with the will.

But here again we have the same queer position, in which the reason that set itself up as the last word is no longer even the latest word. We have the same strange overlapping of later and later fashions until the mere denial of miracles has rather the power of a familiar fallacy than of a fresh one. All sorts of people still vaguely suppose that somebody or other has altered everything by discrediting the old miracles, even while they themselves are crediting new miracles. The old Protestants used to say that marvels were credible if they were old enough ; if they were in the age of the Apostles under the immediate shadow of the Cross. The new Protestants really say that they are credible if they are new enough ; if they are done under what they call scientific conditions ; that is, in a dark room with a conjurer and two or three restless sceptics hungering for a religion. Now it seems to me very extraordinary that Modernists should be so anxious and in so much of a hurry to fix their own negative dogmas ; when they profess such a dislike of dogmas ; when they can see for themselves how rapidly the world is changing ; and when they profess themselves to base their whole hope for humanity upon that sort of change. We do not need any such future to give us a faith. But they surely might wait a little more patiently before fixing their faith of the future, when every new faith of the present has been more miraculous than the last. Only of course, as Father Woodlock points out, they have done what they always do ; they have tried to turn even their own discovery of their own mistake into an argument against other people. Having declared certain things to be utterly impossible, they have since discovered them to be quite possible ; but the former shows only that the miracles cannot have happened, and the latter only shows that they cannot have been miracles. Because nobody can rise into the air, Christ was only a myth. Because anybody can rise

into the air, Christ was only a man. It is sometimes difficult to keep pace with these contradictory reasons rapidly alleged to support the same contradiction. But I have never been able to understand why the Modernist, even if he can see nothing of the truths, does not begin to suspect something from seeing so many of his own errors.

This is no place, nor have I any claim, to deal with the positive side of faith as distinct from this negative criticism of its negation. But I will add one point made by Father Woodlock which affects me very strongly: the passage in which he points out that the Catholic acceptance of a super-rational, in contradistinction to an irrational function in the soul does save him from the need of making a number of fine distinctions, which are not only priggish as intellectual distinctions, but seem almost as snobbish as social distinctions. The Modernist has to be always talking about schools of thought and stages of enlightenment, about people who have read this and studied that, about understanding this, that and the other in a particular sense, until we lose the very notion of bringing his "simplified" theology to anybody as news, let alone good news. Our complex theology is only complex when we study it. It is simple when we see it. It can be seen as a whole and loved like a person. The plainest peasant in the smallest church sees it as a single thing, and the greatest Catholic scholar still sees it as the same thing. But a hundred straws split in a hundred ways are not one thing and never will be; and are no more like it because some people thought that a straw showed how the wind blew. The wind has already changed.

G. K. CHESTERTON.

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INTRODUCTION

AT the request of some of those who listened to the following lectures in Farm Street Church, in February, 1925, they have now been printed and are offered to a wider public. The third lecture on "Miracles" has been considerably expanded in its printed form.

The topic of Modernism was selected because of its bearing on the prospects of "Reunion." The return of the English-speaking peoples to visible union with the Catholics of the rest of the world at some future day should be the object of the hopes and prayers of all who have Christ's interests at heart. It seemed to me that Modernist teaching, if widely accepted in the Episcopal Churches of England and America, would be a permanent and impassable barrier to any such reunion. The spirit of Modernism is more essentially opposed to the Catholic Spirit and Faith than is even militant Protestantism.

I should be less surprised to hear of the conversion of John Kensit to the Catholic Church than I should be if I heard that Dean Inge or Bishop Barnes had "come over" to Rome. Protestantism of the militant type lives and thrives on a bigotry that is fed by misrepresentation and misunderstandings. If I believed Catholicism to be what Mr. Kensit thinks it, I hope I should hate it as fiercely as he does! The Catholic Church, as seen by the average, "well-brought-up," Low Churchman or Nonconformist has as much resemblance to the reality as the war-time German caricature of an Englishman bore to the genuine John Bull.

Now misunderstandings can be removed. Please God one day they *will* be removed and the feeling of strong aversion may give place to a more conciliatory

attitude. The truth may come to be accepted when the misrepresentations are recognized to be such and are set aside. All that is best in Protestantism will be found to be really part of Catholic truth.

But Modernism, unlike militant Protestantism, knows what it is rejecting. Extreme Modernists are "After-Christians"—men who have had opportunities of knowing the Christian faith and who have either not accepted it or who have first accepted and then rejected it. "After-Christians" seldom return to beliefs they have abandoned. As is shown in the following lectures, the Modernist "re-statement" is a definite rejection of the old truths of the Christian Creeds, and it is a rejection in the name of Science and "progress."

Dr. Hort has said: "Criticism is not dangerous, save when it is merely a tool for reaching a result, believed on *speculative postulates*."

It would not be fair to Modernism to accuse it of making the destruction of traditional belief its end and objective; but it *does* arrive finally at the destruction of belief in the traditional dogmas of the Creeds. It reaches that conclusion, because it starts its work of criticism with one or two guiding principles, "speculative postulates," which it has elevated to the dignity of fundamental laws of critical science; and *these "speculative postulates" happen to be false*. The chief of these and the one responsible for most of the destructive criticism of Modernism is the assumption that miracles are utterly impossible, even to an Almighty God, and that they must be, at once and on principle, eliminated from any record before it can be accepted as serious history.

Extreme Modernism is so built upon this axiom that its conclusions mainly rest on and, indeed, grow out of this "anti-miraculous" assumption of scientists. The "purely human non-miraculous Christ" of the Cambridge Modernist Conference is the logical outcome of argument starting from the critical principle that the miraculous is impossible.

In the third of the lectures here published, this fundamental principle is discussed at some length, and the reasons are examined which certain scientists

have advanced as proofs of this law. But, for most Modernists, the law is merely a "speculative postulate," and on the strength of this "speculative postulate" the dogmas of the Christian Faith have been declared to be incredible.

Modernist mentality is the most complete antithesis to that childlike spirit of docility which Christ demanded from all—learned and unlearned alike—as a necessary condition for entry into His Kingdom on earth, the Catholic Church. Modernism is a religion of rationalistic Naturalism, of "free thought." It formally rejects the method of external authority as the method of arriving at and holding to the knowledge of the truths of divine revelation. Not merely, then, have the doctrines of the Faith been rejected, but the very method of Faith has been repudiated. Faith is retained only in the Protestant sense of trust; and as such it is indifferent to the articles of the Creed. "For the Modernist, faith, or personal *trust* in God, is far more important than *belief* or assent to propositions about God," is the way Dr. Major, the Editor of the *Modern Churchman*, expresses it in a recent article¹

In the same article he also says: "Critical studies have not altered for the Modernist the *content* of God's revelation in its highest form; but it has altered for the Modernist the conception of the *mode* of Divine Revelation. The Modernist does not believe that miraculous methods were used. The revelation is at once supernatural in its source, natural in its method. It is, moreover, not external to men but internal."

In estimating the "*contents of revelation in its highest form*," Modernists wait to see how much remains after their criticism has completed its work and ruthlessly cut out every trace of the miraculous from the Gospel. The residue is God's revelation, and that residue alone is "Gospel truth."

It has been said that Modernism "is an intellectual method rather than a formulated creed." This is in the main true; but Modernism has certainly formulated some quite distinct denials of the truths

¹ *Hibbert Journal*, July, 1924.

expressed in the Creeds. Those denials that refer to the Person of Our Divine Saviour are dealt with in my second lecture. Many Modernists have not yet reached the stage of these radical rejections of fundamental truth. They have not applied their principles as logically as the extremists, and still cling to some Christian truths which logically, should, on Modernist principles,¹ have been jettisoned with the others.

Modernism would be untrue to its principles and its designation if it were to issue a final statement of the doctrines of its Faith. Its work can never be completed in any one age. It is quite probable that the development of the science of psychology in the next generation will carry Modernists still further away from Christian truth. Psycho-analysts have not yet got seriously to work on the soul of Christ. When they do find time to devote their attention to Him, their "speculative postulates" and the conclusions they deduce from them will, no doubt, be received by Modernists of the next generation as reverently as those of the present-day receive from present-day scientists the dogma of the impossibility of miracles. In a paper read at the Oxford Modern Churchmen's Conference (1924), we are told: "There is impending at the present time another great conflict which, I think, will be a great deal more severe than the conflict a generation ago (between biology and religion)—a conflict between religion and psychology—especially that branch of psychology known as the new psychology which attempts to investigate the hidden motives of human conduct and the hidden sources of human belief. Questions are raised, for instance, as to the ultimate sources of our beliefs in religion and in ethics. The kind of questions raised are these: Whether prayer is anything but auto-suggestion; Whether God is not merely a projection of a "father-complex"; Whether religion itself is not an infantile attitude towards life, a *neurosis*; Whether belief in an after-life is not simply a belief encouraged by those who are

¹ See Mr. Kirsopp Lake's criticism of Dean Inge's present doctrinal standpoint in the *Hibbert Journal*, October, 1924.

incapable of meeting their responsibilities in this life.”¹

Bishop Gore writes some words in the preface to his book on “The Holy Spirit and the Church,” which bear upon the subject of these lectures, and may be quoted here. He says: “It is our duty and responsibility to think freely. . . . There is, of course, a risk in thinking freely. Free-thinking, free criticism, may lead us away from the Faith. . . . Of course, a minister of the Christian religion, who, by thinking freely, is led by irresistible conviction outside the central tradition of the faith he was ordained to maintain, must cease to hold office as a minister of the Church.” Modernists refuse to accept this verdict which Dr. Gore here lays down as a matter “of course.” Dr. Major writes: “The Modernist feels that he ought not to separate himself from the historic church. If he be cast out for unorthodoxy, that is a different matter. He cannot, he feels, help that; but he must not leave the Church of his own accord.”²

There is little chance of a Modernist being “cast out for unorthodoxy” from the Anglican Church to-day. Heresy trials are regarded as out of date. Indeed, there is hardly a Christian sect that would be found to-day ready to imitate the recent excommunication by the Vatican of a Catholic ecclesiastic for teaching false doctrine. There are Modernists on the judicial bench of Bishops of the Anglican Church, and their number and influence is more likely to increase in the future than decrease.

The real menace of Modernism is that it can, and does, make its voice heard as that of the authentic Christian message, even in Cathedral pulpits. Its teaching will often be reinforced by the very circum-

¹ In an article in the *Expository Times* for July, 1923, we have examples given us by Mr. F. J. Rae of the analysis of a number of Biblical characters by a “new psychologist.” He tells us: “According to Swisher, Paul was a neurotic suffering from a violently repressed love-life. . . . Job also suffered from a heavy neurosis, though happily in his case, he was psycho-analysed and got relief. It was otherwise with Ecclesiastes. He, unhappily, was an unharmonized neurotic suffering from a violent repression . . .” One has usually to content oneself with very partial quotation when borrowing from Freudian psycho-analysts!

² *Hibbert Journal*, July, 1924

stances in which it is uttered. It is given a "fair field and no favour" in its contest with Evangelicalism and Anglo-Catholicism to gain the predominance as the normal "C. of E." doctrine.

There is a subtle appeal to the vanity of the average man in the preaching of rationalism, which the preaching of a dogmatic church must lack, and this will give Modernism an advantage over the other parties in the Church. The Naturalism of its message makes less call for humility than does the preaching of Mystery and the true Supernatural. And there is a sense of being a "superior" person which is delicately insinuated in Modernist writings and which flatters human self-esteem. A Modernist feels that he "knows better" than the poor, deluded fools who have not yet heard that Science has proved miracles to be impossible, and who still fondly believe in a divine miraculous Christ, Virgin-born, and risen from the tomb, as the Founder of the Church! Like the Gnostics of an earlier age, Modernists conceive themselves to be "*pneumatici*," the exceptional people, the "spiritual." Modernist writings usually convey this impression. It is the ground of Dr. Inge's claim for toleration, and his demand that Modernists should not be obliged to have the same beliefs as the average man. He said, in his Presidential Address, at the 1924 Oxford Conference of Modern Churchmen: "It is no part of the programme of Liberal Christianity to destroy the belief in Miracles. It is enough for us to claim that a standardized orthodoxy, adapted to *the supposed mental calibre of the majority* ought not to be imposed upon everybody." Modernism is thus not intolerant, but it demands equal toleration in the Church for the scepticism of those who "know better" than the common multitude.¹

¹ In a recent controversy between the Modernist Bishop of Birmingham, Dr. Barnes, and the Anglo-Catholics of his diocese, His Lordship more than hints that his opponents are "in danger of being submerged by folk beliefs of hoary antiquity." He says that "these hardy remnants of pre-Christian paganism can only be destroyed by rational thought and by the use of scientific method." The Bishop must have quite won over the Nonconformists by the following passage in his speech: "In the intellectual decline of the last centuries of the Roman Empire, Pagan beliefs entered Christianity. A sacerdotalism grew up entirely foreign to the

God's plan, the method of Faith, does not draw these distinctions, nor in submitting to the method of Faith has the scholar any advantage over the simple peasant.

When Bishop Gore speaks of the "duty of thinking freely even though free thinking and free criticism may lead us away from the Faith," he raises a moral problem that seems to call for a fuller treatment than it has received in his book. His theory of Church authority seems to us Catholics to be vague and unsatisfactory. It cannot answer the simple query of a child, "What must I believe and why must I believe it?"

Unlimited free-thinking *might* be a duty, if Christ had not established an infallible Church and commissioned it to teach dogmatically in His name and promised to stand by in its teaching. If there be no distinction between an "*ecclesia docens*" and an "*ecclesia discens*" in Christ's Church—Dr. Gore denies that there is such a distinction—then the duty of "free-thinking" might seem to be all that is left for earnest men seeking to know the truth. It may be the duty of all who have failed to find the infallible teacher. Plato has said somewhere: "A man must needs take the best and most irrefragable of human theories . . . *unless he can find some Word of God* which shall more securely and surely carry him through life." Catholics believe that the Eternal Word of God was made flesh: the Wisdom of the Father became Incarnate. We believe that He preached and taught and saw to it that we in later ages might "listen in" to His Word, reaching down to us across the centuries. "He that heareth you, heareth Me: He that despiseth you, despiseth Me," are not the words of One who was establishing a system of free-thought and free criticism or private judgment with regard to His Truth. The vagaries of extreme Modernism are object lessons in the hopelessness of trying to reach the full

teaching of the New Testament. The priesthood of the laity was the dominant note of the early Church, and the Liberal Evangelical insisted that the Christian minister had no sacerdotal powers which the layman did not possess. . . . Christ was as truly present when a layman or Free Church minister presided at Holy Communion as when an Archbishop took the service."—*Birmingham Post*, January, 22nd, 1925.

truth of Christ's revelation by the method of rationalism and unrestrained "free criticism."

Protestantism was founded on a theory of private interpretation of what was accepted as the written Word of God—the Bible. It clung to some external rule and bowed to some external authority. It left some scope for the exercise of that "*obsequium intellectus*" which is the worship of faith. But Modernism has, by its criticism, rejected the infallibility of the Bible which is now only regarded in a very limited sense as God's Word. The Bible has for Modernists lost its authority: its word is not decisive, and the subjective test of "religious experience" is put as the final Modernist test of truth. This subjective norm is notoriously a fallible one, and it has been appealed to in the course of the Christian era to justify belief in the most contradictory and, at times, immoral doctrines. The Editor of *The Modern Churchman*, Dr. Major, would be ready to admit Quakers, Christian Scientists, and Unitarians into the "Catholic Church of the Future" without any further dogmatic tests than the claim that they have had "religious experiences." It is extremely likely that when the "new psychology" has finished its analysis of these subjective "experiences" it will give an explanation for them which, like Laplace's explanation of the Universe, will not require the hypothesis of a God. A speaker at the 1924 Oxford Conference says: "Granted that there is a consciousness (in prayer) of communion which appears to be with some external power, is that appearance correct, or is the communion really with some part of the man's own nature which is ordinarily submerged? Only the professional psychologist is really competent to discuss this question properly."

Perhaps the conclusions reached by Extreme Modernists may lead to a reaction in favour of Church Authority. Many sincere Anglicans may be led to reconsider the claims of infallibility by the spectacle of what its rejection leads to. Men being hurried down the path to infidelity by the rigid application of the principles of Modernism may stop and question

themselves: "Quo Vadis?" They may be led to return to the "parting of the ways" and they may take the road that leads to the "City of Peace" through submission to the Divinely appointed Teacher, in whom the Spirit of Truth dwells "for ever" and with whom is Christ Himself "all days, even to the end of the world." If this should happen, it is just possible that even Modernism may come to serve a providential purpose in God's plan for Christian reunion.

In a paper on "A Statement of Agreement," published in "The Lambeth Joint Report on Church Unity: A Discussion," the Archbishop of York writes: "The way may be long, the difficulties are assuredly great, but men who have once seen the vision of a true Catholic Church will never leave the road. They will say, in loyalty to it, If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning." They may not reach the Holy City themselves, but even so they will be content to die with their faces still resolutely set towards it and leave to their children the unconquered hope that *their* feet may yet stand within its gates."

The Archbishop speaks of a "vision of *a* true Catholic Church," as though *the* true Catholic Church were not a living, visible reality to-day within reach of all who seek and are given the grace to recognize Her. He sees, evidently, that the way to the "corporate reunion" of Christendom is a "long way," and the present and many succeeding generations may live and die before such a blessed day of reconciliation dawns for the divided Christian world.

I have been accused of being an opponent to the ideal of what is called by Anglicans "corporate reunion," because I see so clearly and have openly expressed my conviction that such "reunion" is at best a "mirage," visioning what perchance may be brought about some day but lies far beyond the horizon of the present generation. Yet no man living to-day need die "outside the Holy City with his face set resolutely towards it," comforting himself with the hope that at least the feet of his children or his children's children may stand within its gates. If he sees the Church, he can enter it.

From the day of Newman to the present time over 700 Anglican clergymen have left all and journeyed along the same road, their sincerity and singleness of purpose proved by the pain and sacrifice entailed in climbing the path alone. They came because they saw the "City on the Hill," the true "City of Peace," and because they knew that *at all costs* they must be within its walls before they died. For them the path was not long. The children of many of them and the children of the thousands who followed them along the same path,¹ have been born within the City, heirs to the secure faith and undoubted sacraments that Christ intended for all who bear His name.

Those who realize that they are outside the Church of Christ must hasten to enter: and for them the gate stands wide and their welcome is such as is given by a loving Mother to children who have heedlessly strayed and have found their way home at last. Thus has it been with those who have been offered and have accepted the final grace of Faith. That grace showed them that all true parts of Christ's Church must find their stability in resting on the foundation that Christ Himself has laid. Converts to Rome come because they realize that any Church which stands apart from Peter, which owes nothing to him and repudiates the successors in his office, cannot be the Church built by Christ on Peter. "Thou art the 'rock-man,' and upon this rock I will build *My* Church and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it and to *thee* will I give the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven."

But the vast majority of sincere Anglicans and Nonconformists seem quite satisfied that the English Church, or their own denomination, with all its faults, is still a part of the Catholic Church. As long as they believe this they must stay where they are. Though East and West alike reject their claim, I am satisfied that they *do* sincerely believe it to be true. I could not believe, as I do, in their sincerity did I think that each and all had rejected the grace that has led so

¹ Within the ten years 1914—1923 official returns show that 105,358 converts were received into the Catholic Church in England and Wales.

many thousands to submission to the Pope within the last half-century in England.

Sincere Anglo-Catholics, who hold firmly to the dogmas of the Creeds, and who cling to so very many Catholic truths and practices, have a hard task before them to-day. On their courage and loyalty, strengthened by the grace of God—which will not be lacking to them—depends the Christianity of the Church of England in the future. There must be no truce or armistice with Modernism, no agreeing to a compromise that might even result in the Creeds becoming merely an “alternative use” in the liturgy of the English Church. Modernists may grow in strength and may claim this concession at some future day. Our prayers and sympathy go with the Anglo-Catholic body in its struggle ; for none of us can feel indifferent to the triumph of Christianity over Rationalism at altars and in pulpits that were once the Catholic altars and pulpits of undivided Western Christendom.

LECTURE I

MODERNISM AND THE CREEDS

IN beginning a course of lectures in a Catholic church on the subject of Modernism I felt that a few words of explanation were called for at the outset.

Why speak of Modernism in such a place? Catholics are, thank God, untainted by this present-day heresy, which gathers into itself most of the heresies of the early ages of the Church. A Catholic pulpit is protected from Modernism. A priest who preached its doctrines would be promptly unfrocked and excommunicated. And every lay Catholic knows that to reject, even interiorly, the defined dogmas of the Catholic Creeds is the grievous sin of heresy. Modernism is not, thank God, a domestic matter for those who belong to the "Household of the Faith."

Well, it may be asked, what boots it to drag out into the light of day skeletons of old heresies that skulk in Anglican or Nonconformist cupboards? I reply that Modernism is no longer a skeleton hidden in the cupboards of the divided Christian sects. These dry bones of ancient heresies have clothed themselves in the flesh of up-to-date phraseology and walk abroad at noonday. Modernism is a present reality in England and America. It is to-day broadcasted in the popular press, and proclaimed by preachers from Cathedral pulpits.

The old vertical divisions which marked off the various denominations from each other, are of less importance to-day than the horizontal divisions running through each religious body outside the Catholic Church. The Bishop of Gloucester, Dr. Headlam, utters an obvious truth when he says: "The divisions of Christians at the present time are not divisions so far as the faith goes between the Church of England, and the Congregationalists and the Presbyterians and so on: but they are divisions which run all through

the different bodies, divisions which arise from such questions as Modernism, the doctrine of the Atonement, the best method of stating the Incarnation. On all these points the divisions are within the different bodies and not between one body and another.”¹

These horizontal divisions separate Modernists or “ Liberal Christians ” from the Orthodox Evangelicals in each sect. With regard to the Church of England there is another and most important factor in the problem.

There are in this Church :

(1) the “ Low Church ” Evangelicals, a body apparently decreasing in importance though it makes its Protestantism heard against High Church activities from time to time.

(2) There are the Modernists, a steadily growing body of cultured and learned men. Bishop Hensley Henson, Bishop Barnes, Dr. Major of Ripon Hall, Oxford, and Dean Inge, are the guiding lights of this party in England. Both Modernists and Evangelicals have been recently concentrating in an attempt to suppress the

(3) “ Anglo-Catholic ” party, and the next decade may see a drawn-out battle between Modernism and Anglo-Catholicism, the two leading parties in the Church of England. The issue of this conflict may be fraught with consequences that will deeply affect the hope of reunion of the English people at any future time in the Catholic Church. It is because of our loyalty to Christ and our interest in the faith of a people which was once Catholic and for whose return to Catholicism we long and pray, that Modernism is a matter of deep concern to us Catholics.

A truce between Modernism and Anglo-Catholicism would seem to me to be treachery on the part of Anglo-Catholics—treachery to the truths they teach and to the creed they cling to. “ Fellowship ” is worth having, but not at the cost of compromise on the Christian Creeds. The mere “ toleration ” of the teaching of Catholic truths on equal terms with the Modernist heresies in the English Church should not

¹ Lambeth Joint Report : A Discussion, p. 130.

be an ideal that can commend itself to the Anglo-Catholic party; nor do we think that it is pardonable, even as temporary tactics, in dealing with the enemies of true Faith in Christ.

The programme of the Anglo-Catholic Congress, 1923, says: "We cannot be content to be for ever a mere section of a Church, part of which, with equal recognition from authority, contradicts our teaching and denies our claim." Anglo-Catholicism should not be content till authority refuses *any* recognition to those who deny their Faith.

The late Bishop Weston of Zanzibar, whose untimely death is a severe loss to the Anglo-Catholic party and the cause of Christianity in the English Church, was much distressed at the elevation of Canon Hensley Henson to the Bishopric of Hereford, and stated his view of the effect on the Anglican Episcopal Body of its acceptance of its new colleague. Writing apropos of Bishop Hensley Henson's consecration, he says: "The consecration took place and the new Bishop of Hereford (now Durham) now sits in the Episcopal Synod of the Metropolitan Church of Canterbury (now York). *That Synod, therefore, no longer guarantees to us Christ's teaching or the four Gospels or the Creeds.* And since the (then) Bishop of Durham felt called to share in consecrating the new bishop, the Metropolitan Church of York is in like case." He explains why he did not break with Canterbury on account of the action of the Archbishop, and here he shows himself unable to accept the principles of the "Formula of Hormisdas." "Were our diocese financially independent of the Canterbury Province, it would be a simple matter to renounce official allegiance to its Metropolitan *without breaking communion* and to carry on. But this is not so."¹

The "breaking communion" with those who are guilty of heresy was insisted on by the Hormisdas Formula. The principle accepted in early Church history was that those who communicate with heretics become thereby infected with heresy.

It is because of the existence of the Anglo-Catholic

¹ "The Christ and His Critics." p. 145.

party—admittedly the most devout, zealous, and rapidly growing party in the Church—that the Modernist Bishop of Durham declares :¹ “ The Church of England is the most divided of all Churches.”

The fierce opposition of Low Church Protestantism and of Modernism to Anglo-Catholics is undoubtedly due to the apparent Romeward tendency of the High Church movement, and a panic lest this party should come to dominate the Church of England. Bishop Hensley Henson’s fear of the growth of Anglo-Catholicism is expressed in an article in the *Edinburgh Review* (April, 1923), where he admits, “ We need no elaborate argument to convince us that there is nothing extravagant or improbable in Mr. Arnold Pinchard’s confident hope that the ‘ small party ’ (i.e., the Anglo-Catholics) which he represents may succeed in dominating the National Church.” Hatred of Anglo-Catholicism is a reflection of Protestantism’s fear and hatred of Rome. Elsewhere he says : “ The Anglo-Catholic movement which now claims to include at least one-third of the parochial incumbents, can only end, as the Tractarians ended, in Rome.”

A spokesman for the Anglo-Catholic party seems almost to admit as much. Mr. Wilfred Knox writes : “ In the rapid growth of Catholicism (in the Church of England) lies the main hope for a restoration of unity with the Holy See.”² And again : “ The reunion of Christendom means, for us, primarily and above all else, the reunion of the Church in this country with the rest of the Catholic Church in the West and the undoing the evil wrought by the Reformation.”

It is fairly obvious that Reunion without Rome is reunion with more than half of Christendom left outside. Let me state it graphically.³ Leaving Nonconformity for the present let us imagine a committee appointed to sit in proportional representation of the Episcopal Churches throughout the world : (1) (Roman) Catholic, (2) the Eastern Group of some

¹ *In Defence of the Church of England*, p. 96.

² *The Catholic Movement in the Church of England*, p. 244.

³ The author borrows this illustration from Monsignor Canon Moyes.

15 autocephalous "Orthodox" Churches, (3) the Episcopal Church of England, Colonies and America. There would be 47 members on such a Committee, each member standing for ten million members in his denomination. Rome would have 30 representatives, the East would have 14, and Anglicanism would have 3.

The Message of Modernism is a clear menace to any union between these bodies in the Catholic Church. The 44 Committee men representing Rome and the Eastern Churches would say to the three representing Anglicanism that no reunion can even be subject of discussion save on the basis of sincere belief in the Creeds of Christendom.

The spokesman of the great Russian Orthodox Church, Archbishop Antonyi of Kiew, said to the delegates of Pan-protestantism at the Genevan Conference a few years ago: "The only possible form of union among the Churches is dogmatic, nay complete dogmatic union."

The terms of Rome are no less exacting.

The Archbishop of York would seem to lay down the same condition when he writes: "There can be no unity of the Church unless there is a unity of Faith."¹

Modernists—as we shall see—reject a dogmatic basis as an essential of reunion. To the Modernist, the Creeds are no longer expressions of his sincere and genuine belief. He would retain them, if at all, not because of their truth, but for sentimental reasons. These ruins of a former faith are to be kept, for the present, solely for their traditional or historical interest. They are believed to have lost their original use, as have the ruined abbeys of former days. The recital of the Creeds by a Modernist clergyman in the liturgy is, for him, but the mere formality that gives him admission to the pulpit in which he may preach the clear contradiction of what he has just declared to be his belief.² The fabric of revealed religion is

¹ Lambeth Joint Report: A Discussion, p. 59.

² The *Church Times* (January 18th, 1923) says of a leading Modernist: "Surely Dean Inge's experience has long ago taught him that a highly placed and paid dignitary of the Church of England may hold and proclaim any beliefs he likes with absolute safety and impunity." It is a recognition of this fact that accounts each

believed by Modernists to have cracked and crumbled in the atmosphere of modern scientific thought. Criticism is alleged to have corroded the contents of the Creeds of Christendom. And so, in the pulpit, the Modernist preacher gives "a re-statement" or a "re-interpretation" of the Creed; and his "re-statement" is found to be a denial and his "re-interpretation" a *misinterpretation* so glaring as to bear no real relation to the clear meaning of the words he affects to re-interpret.

May I borrow from Dr. Sparrow-Simpson's "Modernism and the Person of Christ" (p. 21) a passage which puts this point with lucidity. It is an important point, for it exposes a very common modernist fallacy that has often masqueraded as a reasonable and necessary process of re-interpretation. He tells us: "We may cordially welcome re-statement so long as it retains the original conception unimpaired. But we can only reject it when it substitutes a contrary doctrine for the ancient Faith. Unitarianism can never be a restatement of the Trinitarian Christianity. It is nothing else than its negation. . . . A Jesus whose personality is simply human like our own, who did not exist before He appeared on earth, who is only one of God's creatures, though the best, a man inspired, differing from Moses and the Prophets only in degree, is not the same as a Jesus who is the everlasting Son of the Father and whose personality is literally divine."

As an Anglo-Catholic pamphlet on "The Use of the Creeds" puts it: "There is all the difference in the world between expressing ancient truth in terms of modern thought and dressing up modern ideas in ancient language. One is development, the other repudiation. One is revision in the sense of a 'Revised version of the Bible'; the other is revision in the sense that a man is said to 'revise' the beliefs of a lifetime. The view that Christian 'progress' involves

year for a large proportion of the converts from the English Church to a Church where unorthodoxy in a preacher is at once penalized by suspension and in the case of contumacy in heresy by excommunication. The doctrinal comprehensiveness and toleration of heresy in the Anglican Church we believe to be one disproof of its claim to be Catholic.

an indefinite series of new statements of belief would make us need to alter an old text and represent our Lord as saying, ' Heaven and Earth will never pass away, but My words will be revised from time to time, as need arises ' " (p. 8).

As I shall show in the next lecture. Modernism offers us " a perfectly human non-miraculous Christ " instead of the Christ of the uncensored Gospels and the Christ of the Creeds. The Christianity of the Modernist is purged of the miraculous and of the supernatural.

The pseudo-supernatural which Modernism affects to retain is simply belief in God and Spirit. The Modernist is not a materialistic monist: he believes in Mind behind Matter. But this is not equivalent to belief in the genuine supernatural of Christian theology.

Hence we disagree with Mr. J. W. Thompson and such writers who claim to have kept the Supernatural while rejecting miracle. " To reject miracles," says Mr. Thompson, " is not to reject the supernatural. Indeed this is the only condition upon which science and supernaturalism can survive side by side. . . . It makes it possible to retain the essence of belief in the supernatural in the only form in which educated thought can long retain it, that is without belief in the miraculous."¹

A leading Modernist, Dr. Major, the author of a paper read at the Modern Churchman's Conference at Cambridge, 1921, says: " The Modernist believes in the Supernatural, but it is a non-miraculous supernatural . . . the Modernist believes in a perfectly human non-miraculous Christ."²

In the Modern Churchman's Conference in August, 1924, at Oxford, Rev. J. C. Hardwick more clearly defines the pseudo-supernatural of Modernism. He says: " If we chose the term ' supernatural ' to describe the higher qualities of existence, such as life and mind, there is nothing to prevent our doing so, . . . but the enrichment of nature by scientific discoveries is rendering the concept of the supernatural

¹ Miracles of the New Testament.

² Conf. No. 1921, p. 197.

redundant. It will tend by a natural and almost unnoticeable movement of thought to disappear. . . . We need to disencumber our religion of this incubus of the supernatural—or rather of the dualism of the natural and supernatural.”¹

So the boasted retention of the supernatural by Modernists merely means that they, like all 20th century thinkers of their kind, have reacted from the materialism of the Victorian scientists and are prepared to admit that there is Mind active in the world, and other forces besides material forces; and also, that there is an overruling Providence immanent in Creation. They have got back to the position held by Pelagius.

Far other is the old Christian understanding of the word Supernatural. To a Catholic, the Supernatural order means primarily the invisible realm of Grace; secondarily it includes those supernatural external signs called miracles which God has made use of to authenticate His revelation of this supernatural dispensation. Adam—the first human being—was created in the supernatural state because endowed from the first with the supernatural gift of Sanctifying Grace.

He was given as his eternal destiny to share the Beatific Vision, a happiness that his human nature could not claim, and to which it had no proportion apart from Grace. The principle of the supernatural life of man here below is Grace. The Church, Sacraments, Infallibility, are all part of the machinery of that supernatural dispensation. The exercise of faith was chosen by God as the supernatural method of adhering to God’s Truth, made known by the revelation of Christ and guarded throughout the Christian era by the Spirit of Truth.

Reason is shared unequally by different men. Some have opportunities beyond others of reaching truth by the processes of reason. Again, some truths that God has revealed are inaccessible even to the keenest philosophic mind. The ignorant and simple are not handicapped in the attainment of the truths of religion by the method of Faith, and the contents

¹ Conf. No. 1924, p. 391.

of the Creed include the knowledge of divine mysteries such as the Blessed Trinity and the Incarnation which could not be reached by unaided natural reason.

The exercise of Faith, resting on a divinely protected Teacher of truth, was then God's plan for mankind. The Creeds of the Church express the truths which were committed to Her keeping by God to be taught by Her to all—learned and unlearned alike—in Christ's name, and with the backing of His Authority. It is these Creeds, expressing the doctrines of the Faith, that the Modernists attack.

They also reject the very method of Faith—the resting on Authority. Faith simply means the acceptance of truth on the authority of a teacher. *Divine Faith rests on the best possible authority*, God's knowledge, truth and goodness. "If we receive the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater."—(1 John v. 9). The act of Faith is necessarily supernatural, for we get power to make it and to adhere to it from the gratuitous gift of Grace.

With us, Faith is the supreme certainty. To a Catholic the assent of faith is not a hesitating "opinion" or "view." The Catholic is *quite sure* Jesus was born of a Virgin and rose from the dead. I wish to emphasize this certainty of Faith as understood by Catholics. Many non-Catholics regard Faith as a hesitating, uncertain assent. Even Bishop Gore—who would repudiate Modernism—thus describes his idea of Faith. He calls it "a basis of security in the strength of which it is probably good for every good Christian *to feel a certain amount of hesitation*."—(Roman Claims, p. 50.)¹

¹ cf. "The glory of the Church of England," says Canon Peter Green, of Manchester (*Times*, April 4th, 1924) "is that it requires us to believe the great historic facts of the Christian religion, but as to the interpretations of them, the doctrines in which we formulate what these facts mean, the Church is very, very sparing." Our complaint against the Modernists is that they deny even the great historic facts. Bishop Weldon, deprecating any excommunication of the Modernists in 1921 said: "I think their theory is wrong, *but it may be right!*" The words italicized show that the Bishop has not got faith in our sense of the word. He is expressing an opinion with an element of doubt in it. Certain faith would seem to

The *Church Times* recently, in a leading article, spoke of Roman Catholics who believe in and rest on an infallible authority as "walking by vision." "Anglicans," it said, were content to "walk by faith." Though "vision" is reserved, we believe, for the blessed in Heaven, yet our Catholic Faith has a certainty that compares well with the certainty of vision. "Blessed are they that have not seen but have believed," could only be said of those whose faith makes them as sure as those who have seen.

The 300,000,000 Catholics in communion with the Pope and the 136,000,000 Christians in the Eastern Orthodox Churches agree in rejecting the Modernist notion of faith; and there can be no possible "reunion" save on the basis of belief—sincere and sure belief—in all the defined dogmas of the Creeds. To reject any defined Church dogma is to reject the Church's commission to dogmatize. Both Rome and the Eastern Church believe firmly in this commission and, consistently with this belief, they both reject as unchristian the modern doctrine that "one belief is as good as another."

It is not my purpose here to take the Articles of the Creeds one by one and show that nearly every article has been explained away by Modernists. I want rather to speak of the manner in which Modernists use a Creed. They do not refuse to recite it, but, I repeat, they make it clear that its liturgical use by clergymen is little more than a password which admits them to the pulpit, and, once installed there, they are perfectly free to deny in their discourses the very truth they have just affirmed or are about to affirm in liturgy. The cracking fabric of a cathedral dome is to-day, alas! a greater anxiety to many Anglicans than the crumbling creed of their deans! be impossible where there is no infallibility for it to rest on. This truth was forcibly brought out in the late W. H. Mallock's *Doctrine and Doctrinal Disruption*. In his *Rome and the Early Church* the Rev. C. F. Rogers congratulates the English Church on its lack of infallibility. "Though the English Church may have many faults, and the Roman (as she undoubtedly has) many virtues, we have the advantage over her, that we do not claim to be infallible." (p. 54). We fail to see how there could be "one faith" on earth, had not Christ left an infallible teacher to secure it.

The greatest menace to the Christianity of the Church of England is this attitude of Modernist clergymen to the Creeds of their Church.¹

In a paper on "The Uses of a Creed" read at the 1921 Modern Churchman's Conference at Cambridge we are told: "There is no one, and certainly no member of this conference, who could accept the Nicene or Apostles' Creed literally and completely in the sense intended by those who formed those creeds. A Creed, when accepted by any branch of the Church, must not imply that every member of it accepts in a literal sense every article of the creed: it must express a *general loyalty to the Church and its Divine Head* and a recognition of *general unity in fundamental belief*."² And it would seem that no doctrine can be considered as a fundamental of the Christian faith which is denied by any Modernist!

With the Modernist, the old word "Symbol"—which properly meant a password, a test of orthodoxy, a sign of agreement in belief—has been applied to the Creed in the other sense in which it is opposed to literal truth and is often less significant than mere metaphor. Modernists do not reject the language of the Creeds so much as the ideas expressed by the language. Their "re-interpretations" are rejections, not of the phraseology, but of that meaning clearly signified by the phrases which they recite in the Nicene and Apostles' Creed.

An American Modernist, Dr. Leighton Parks, says: "The Modernist with a free conscience rejoices to recite the old formularies and bear witness to the unity of the faith which is the same 'yesterday, to-day

¹ The *Church Times* (July 27th, 1923) recognizes the danger but congratulates itself on the fact that the English temperament does not produce thorough-going Modernists in any great numbers. It says: "The genuine Modernist is a very dangerous person, because he expresses himself in terms of the most unimpeachable orthodoxy." We shall see this more clearly when considering how Modernists understand the words "divine" and "Son of God" which they still apply to Christ.

² It is disquieting to find in one of the Anglo-Catholic "Congress Books" on "The use of the Creeds" that the author, an examining Chaplain to the Bishop of Ripon, states: "Our branch of the Catholic Church does not insist on individual acceptance of the Nicene and Athanasian Creeds by each member separately."

and for ever,' *though the intellectual concepts involved in the ancient words change from age to age.*"¹ That is, "*the Faith*" is said to be the same, but "*the beliefs*" change from age to age! Is this an obscure paradox or merely a contradiction, expressed epigrammatically and sounding both reverent and reassuring to the uncritical or thoughtless?

Thus the Modernist motto seems to be: "Keep the old words, but change their meaning!" Again, the same writer says: "The Modernist repeats the ancient words *ex animo*, but interprets every article in accordance with the *intellectual atmosphere he is breathing.*"²

An American Bishop, Dr. Lawrence, of Massachusetts, with a subtlety of mental reservation and duplicity that ill-informed Protestant bigotry might believe to be the peculiar possession of Jesuit casuists, gives this advice to modernist clergymen who disbelieve the Virgin Birth and find themselves confronted with the duty of affirming their belief that Christ was "born of the Virgin Mary" in reciting the Creed in the ritual. He says: "There are, as we all know, clergymen, a number of them, who find it difficult if not

¹ "What is Modernism?" p. 122.

² Some Anglo-Catholics seem to imagine that Rome may some day "re-state" or "re-interpret"—in the Modernist sense of the words—its defined dogma of the supremacy and infallibility of the Pope. Thus the late Bishop of Zanzibar, Dr. Weston, wrote in his controversy with Bishop Hensley Henson in the *Morning Post* (July, 1923): "My opinion as to admitting the *present* claims of the Pope are well known. . . . No Anglican can rightly submit to the See of Rome to-day. We must work and pray for the time when the Pope, having *restated his claims* and set up a constitutional government at Rome, the English Church can, as a body, hold communion with the Premier Bishop of Christendom." Bishop Weston clearly did not understand the limitations of the Vatican decree. He seems to believe that not merely the final definition itself, of a dogma, but also the "*obiter dicta*" and reasons urged in proof of the dogma which are contained in the document promulgating it, claim to be equally *de fide*, infallible utterances. This is not so. Nor are certain purely disciplinary decrees of congregations, even when confirmed as such by the Pope, imposed as matters of Catholic faith. Anglicans would wish the Pope to be merely the "Chairman," promulgating the decisions of general Councils. They would make the Pope's utterance derive its infallibility solely from the Council. That would be to rest the "foundation" upon the roof and would take all meaning from Christ's words to Peter: "Upon this rock I shall build my Church."

impossible to accept the doctrine of the Virgin Birth. In as much as the two Creeds stand for the essentials of the faith, and as belief in the Virgin Birth is not *to them* an essential, I am clear that *with an honest heart* they may join in the recitals of the Creeds."¹

We see no reason why the same principle may not be extended to disbelief in the Divinity of Christ, His bodily Resurrection on Easter Sunday, and the doctrine of the Blessed Trinity. A Modernist who disbelieves these doctrines may decide that they cannot be essentials of the Faith as he believes them to be untrue, and so "with an honest heart" he recites the creeds that clearly express belief in these truths. Might not a Unitarian and even a Jew recite the Christian Creeds "*ex animo*" according to the advice of Bishop Lawrence, making the mental reservations appropriate to their particular unbeliefs?

Professor Kirsopp Lake, once an Anglican clergyman at Oxford and now a theological professor at Harvard University, himself an extreme Modernist, seems to prefer a more straightforward attitude towards the use of the Creeds. At least he says: "I have myself sometimes wondered whether it would not be simpler to say that the Creed is wrong and cease affirming it."²

It would certainly remove a great danger threatening Christianity in England if all modernist clergymen who disbelieve in the articles of the Creeds were to declare honestly their inability to minister in a Church which uses the Creeds in its worship. A Church which openly tolerates and, by its distribution of preferment, seems to approve of such doctrinal defects, can hardly expect its claim to Catholicity to be taken quite seriously. There is a vast difference between variety in rites and divergence in Faith. Dr. Major writes: "The Church of England seems disposed to-day to grant in some directions a large measure of liturgical freedom: will it also grant a large measure of doctrinal freedom? Will it grant to the clergy, after proper educational preparation, genuine intellectual freedom and the right to teach

¹ "Fifty Years," p. 73.

² Ingersoll, Lecture on "Immortality."

with all sincerity their interpretations of the fundamentals of the faith, provided always that they do so lovingly and reverently.”¹

Rome admits no less than nineteen different liturgical rites within her communion, but she will not tolerate any “variety” in the faith of her children. No matter what his rite may be, each Catholic has the same belief as every other member of the Church.

With regard to the Church of the future, Modernists have a vision of a Church which will insist on *no* dogmatic tests for membership. Mr. Kirsopp Lake looks hopefully for a Church which will frankly accept the “Experimentalist” position. “If so,” he says, “it will not require as a condition of membership that we should accept *any* opinion about Jesus, *not even His own.*”²

So we have here two ideals of a reunited Christendom sharply contrasted and quite irreconcilable in their attitude towards the Catholic Creeds.

Thirty years ago, an Anglican bishop wrote: “The religion of the future will neither be Protestant nor Catholic but simply Christian. The dogmas which have separated communion from communion in the past will fall off as autumn leaves before the fresh winds of God.”

The January (1925) number of the *Modern Churchman* has an article by the Editor, the Principal of Ripon Hall, an Anglican Theological College at Oxford, in which he describes the Church of the future as *he* sees it—the Church as Modernism would make it, if it could gain the victory in the struggle that is now being waged in the non-Catholic theological world. Dr. Major speaks of: “A vision of a Catholic Church which is ready to include all who wish sincerely to be comprehended in it, whether Quakers, Unitarians, Romanists or Christian Scientists. Such a Catholic Church is needed if we are to have organic unity; for Christian experience has proved and is still proving that while some Christians need dogmas, others find them detrimental to their spiritual

¹ Conf. No. 1921, p. 200

² Hibbert Journal, Oct. 1924.

life, and that this is equally true of Sacraments and regulations. . . . Hence the Catholic Church of the future will demand neither dogmas nor Sacraments as essentials of membership. She will substitute 'Amo' for 'Credo' in her formularies."¹ That "Church of the Future," if ever it could be realized, might admit to its membership Christian Scientists and Quakers and Unitarians—but it would be without the hundreds of millions of Catholics. It would also fail to gather in the Eastern Orthodox, for these latter proudly cling to their belief in the Creeds of the Councils as their title to the highly-prized designation of "The Orthodox."²

In the present struggle, our hearts are wholly in sympathy with the Anglo-Catholics and such Evangelicals as consider indifference to or apostasy from the Creed too big a price to pay for external unity in organization. What will be the issue of the conflict with Modernism in England and America God alone foresees.

If the Anglo-Catholics win the battle, it might mean the gradual leavening of the Church of England with very many Catholic beliefs and practices, and this might tend to the return of England at some future date to communion with Rome in the Catholic Church. Devout worshippers at All Saints', Margaret Street, St. Alban's, Holborn, St. Saviour's, Hoxton, and many other churches I might mention, would have little to change in their beliefs and devout practices. They already understand and believe in the Mass, confession of sins, devotion to Our Lady and the Saints, and prayers for the dead; and they sincerely believe all those articles of the Creed which affirm the mysteries of the Blessed Trinity and the Incarnation. To accept the divinely instituted position of St. Peter and his successors seems but a little step beyond; and God's grace is all powerful. We hope and pray that in God's own time this grace may be given and accepted. If Anglicanism as a whole should gradually

¹ *Modern Churchman*, January, 1925.

² One may refer the reader to a very amusing pamphlet by the Rev. R. Knox, called "Reunion all Round" (Society of SS. Peter and Paul, 6d.) in which he foreshadows Dr. Major's *Church of the Future*—a Church including Jews, Mahomedans and infidels!

come to be of the type of the extreme Anglo-Catholicism found in so many English churches to-day, then the happy day of reconciliation would surely be at hand. But Anglo-Catholicism has not merely to conquer Modernism to effect this: it has to win over Evangelicalism and convert the Low Church party to its views—a task of no less difficulty than the other.

And Modernism *may* triumph over Anglo-Catholicism, and in its triumph carry the English people to a rationalism in religion that will be only nominally Christian. Modernism may even succeed in reuniting Nonconformity to itself on the undogmatic, “comprehensive” basis of “no tests of belief” insisted on for communion.

What would happen to the defeated Anglo-Catholics in such an issue? They have stood rough shocks in the past. They have grieved at the sight of an episcopate whose beliefs they have stigmatized as Protestant and heretical, while, in consistency with their Church theory, they have been obliged to say that these “heretics” were really Catholic bishops. To deny “Catholicity” to Anglican Bishops would surely involve denying the Catholicity of Anglicanism. Would Modernism—more blatant and widespread even than it is to-day—open the eyes of Anglo-Catholics to the fact that no “branch” of the Catholic Church *can* be a branch or part of that Church, unless its bishops believe and teach the whole Catholic faith?

Mr. G. K. Chesterton’s conversion to Rome was due, he tells us, under God’s grace, to the unchecked Modernism and heretical teaching of Dean Inge and the Bishop of Durham. He saw that they could be at the same time good Anglicans and—heretics! His logical mind drew its conclusions about the alleged Catholicity of Anglicanism from its complacent toleration of heresy in its dignitaries and official teachers.

A leading spokesman for Anglo-Catholicism, the Rev. W. Knox, writes some striking words which I quote here. Does he *really* mean them? Or is he only uttering a threat to those bishops of his Church who strive to win reunion with Nonconformity at all costs?¹

¹ I may note that Mr. Knox uses the words “English Catholics” where “Anglo-Catholics” would make his meaning less liable to

Mr. Knox says: "It is indeed possible that reunion between English Catholics and the Holy See might come about in another way. It is always conceivable that a Protestant Episcopate might take some action, as for instance, the establishment of general intercommunion with the Nonconformist bodies which would forfeit the Catholic character of the English Church. In such a case, English Catholics would almost inevitably be compelled to seek reconciliation with the Holy See; it is hard to suppose that they could exist permanently as an independent body. In such a case corporate reunion of the English Catholics with the Holy See would be inevitable or almost inevitable."²

The future of Christendom lies in God's hands. May He in His own way and in His own good time bring about the reunion of all Christian bodies in His One visible Church!

When that reunion does come, it must come through sincere agreement in the "one Faith" of the Catholic Creeds. The Modernist compromise, by belief merely in the "highest common factor" of the beliefs found among the divided Christian sects, can never be a principle of union in a Church that claims to be Catholic. The Church which received the commission to teach "*all* the things whatsoever Christ had commanded," and which claims to have within it the Spirit of Truth, Who, as the Divine Founder promised, was to "*abide with it for ever*," can never be tolerant of heresy in its members.

misinterpretation by ordinary readers. With him, "*English Catholics*" are those Anglicans who hold many Catholic beliefs but who are in communion with "Protestant" Anglican bishops whose Catholicity is denied by Rome and by the Eastern Orthodox; while "*Roman Catholics*" stand for those who are in communion with the English Catholic Bishops whose Catholicity is not denied by Anglicans and is accepted by all who are in communion with the Pope throughout the world; but *not* by the Orthodox East. For the East, "Catholic" bishops mean solely bishops of the Orthodox Eastern Church. Both Rome and the Orthodox East cling to the doctrine of the *indivisibility* of the Visible Body of Christ, the Church; and consistently with this fundamental belief, they each assert their claim to be the *whole* Catholic Church and deny the Catholicity of all who are not in their communion.

² *Catholic Movement in the Church of England*, p. 252.

LECTURE II

MODERNISM AND CHRIST

IN our last lecture we considered the attitude of Modernists towards the Creeds. That attitude, I pointed out, will be a permanent and impassable barrier to the union of the divided Christian bodies in the Catholic Church. It would also prevent their union with the Orthodox bodies of Eastern Schismatics, for these bodies rightly insist on a dogmatic union through sincere belief in the Creeds of the early Councils. As we have seen, Modernists are prepared to *recite* these Creeds, so long as the recital does not involve interior acceptance of the doctrines expressed in the Creeds.

With regard to the Godhead of Christ, the Nicene Creed leaves no loophole for evasion : there is no escaping the meaning. The struggles against Arianism and Nestorianism in the Church of the early centuries issued in a statement of Christian truth in which there is no possible ambiguity. Jesus Christ was God, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, become man for our salvation. He existed as God from all eternity : He did not cease to be God when He became Incarnate.

Take the articles of the Nicene Creed : after expressing belief in the Father, the Creed continues : “ (I believe in) One Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, and born of the Father before all ages. God of God : Light of Light : true God of true God. Begotten not made, Consubstantial to the Father, by Whom all things were made. Who for us men and for our salvation came down from Heaven and became incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made man. He was crucified, etc.”

The Catholic Church stands committed to this doctrine *for ever*. We believe that it was under the protection and guidance of the “ Spirit of Truth ” Who abides for ever with Christ’s Church, that the Creed was formed, as a touchstone of Orthodoxy, to distinguish those who had a right to the name Christian

from those whose false doctrines about Christ deprive them of the right to bear His name.

Now the extreme Modernist rejects this clear doctrine of the Creed concerning Christ. We shall see that in this lecture. The fact that he often does so in reverent language and under the plea that he is merely "re-stating" in up-to-date language of the day, or "re-interpreting" according to the intellectual atmosphere of this scientific age, makes his attack on Christian truth all the more dangerous and insidious. Yet the blasphemies are not less objective blasphemies, the heresies no less an assault on divine truth, because they are no longer uttered in the scoffing manner of the old-fashioned, materialistic blasphemer—of the man who could be imprisoned by the law of the land for shocking the Christian ears of the public. Modernist disbelief has the reverent and respectable air of a devout divinity professor, while denying the fundamental truths of the Christian religion. And those who utter these denials do so as ministers of "Christian" Churches, at times preaching their denials from the pulpits of Cathedrals that were once Catholic, attired in the garb of dignitaries of the Church of England or the gown of Doctors of Divinity of our great universities.

Anglo-Catholics, who believe so firmly in the Divinity of Christ and the other articles of the Creed, have been told in plain language that the Modernists have as much right to their position in the Anglican Church as the Anglo-Catholics themselves. Listen to these words, written by the present Bishop of Gloucester in the *Church Times* not long after the Girton Modernist Conference of August, 1921. "I always hold," said Dr. Headlam, "that both for Modernists and for Anglo-Catholics there should be reasonable freedom of interpretation of the formulas of the Church, and just as I think with a little Christian charity we can find room for the Modernists in the Church of England, so I think that probably we can find room in exactly the same way for the people who call themselves at present Anglo-Catholics."¹ This clearly implies that the Church of England does not

¹*Church Times*, July 14th, 1922.

know which is right, for they teach contradictory doctrines. If the Church does know, then surely loyalty to truth should come first. There is no true Christian charity in being indifferent to heresy.

In the Convocation which met in May, 1922, eight months after the epoch-making Conference of Modern Churchmen at Cambridge where Christ's divinity and miracles had been so openly denied by Anglican clergymen, the Bishop of London said "that he was convinced that the Church of England was at the parting of the ways and that the views of Mr. Major and his friends would lead in the next generation to complete scepticism about the Person of Christ."¹

The Archbishop of Canterbury at the same Convocation is reported to have "said without hesitation that some public utterances seemed to him to be absolutely inconsistent with the responsibility and promises of men who had made distinct promises as ministers accredited to be Church teachers." (*ib.*)

The Bishop of Ely—pleading for strong action on the part of the Episcopate—said: "Adhesion to the Nicene Creed was the condition of the Church's right to take her place as part of the Catholic Church. If its teaching was an open question, the credentials which the Church of England offered to Christendom became fraudulent." (*ib.*)

We must remember that all these bishops had solemnly promised at their consecration "to be ready with all diligence to banish and drive away all erroneous and strange doctrine contrary to the Word of God." At this Convocation there lay before them for their judgment, the papers read by Modernists in their Conference. The laity were waiting and expecting to hear their authoritative condemnation by the Bishops. But the then Bishop of Gloucester pleaded that it would be ill-advised for the Bishops to condemn the volume of papers: "In matters of this kind, the appeal to authority has largely lost its power. They could not arrest intellectual thought by authority. It would be futile if they made the pronouncement."²

¹ *Church Times*, Leader, May 12th, 1922.

² The author has already quoted these passages in "Constantinople, etc." (p. 42), but they are worth putting on record here again. Cf. also the following from an American Ecclesiastical

That is to say—the Bishops of the Anglican Church have lost the power to stamp out heresy in the pulpits of that Church. Recently a Roman priest, a professor at an Italian State University, showed that he was infected with Modernism and he was excommunicated and the faithful forbidden to attend his lectures. This action of the Vatican was commented on variously by sections of the British press. But the principle at stake was quite clear. A Church which ceased to excommunicate for heresy would be unfaithful to its most sacred trust, the guarding of the deposit of truth committed to its care. It would be a traitor to the Spirit of Truth which was promised by Christ to His Church to “abide with it for ever.” It would be to renounce the responsibility placed on it when Christ gave it in its first pastors its doctrinal commission and authority in the words. “He that heareth you, heareth Me; he that despiseth you despiseth Me.” “He that believeth not shall be condemned.” The Catholic Church, alone, to-day condemns and excommunicates heretics, as it did in those first centuries of its existence when Creeds were formulated and heresiarchs anathematized. “If he will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as a heathen,” are words of Christ which regulate and limit the bounds of toleration of error demanded from the Church in the name of Christian charity. St. John was full of Christian charity, yet he speaks strongly at times. “Whosoever revolteth and continueth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. If any man comes to you and brings not this doctrine, receive him not into the house, nor say to him ‘God speed.’ For he that saith unto him ‘God speed you’ communicateth with his wicked works.”—(2 John v. 9, 10.) “Charitable” toleration of heretics to-day may be the cruel wrong of infidelity brought into the souls of the generations

Review: “A few years ago a manifesto on the Incarnation, stating the Divinity of Christ in explicit language was prepared by a committee of Bishops of the American Episcopal Church. This, when presented to Bishop Potter, he refused to sign, ‘lest future generations might be hampered in their freedom of belief.’” (American Ecclesiastical Review, October, 1900, p. 396). Such a diffidence seems a renunciation of the commission given to the Church by Christ “to teach.”

still to come. Would that the orthodoxy of those it commissions to teach in its pulpits were a matter of deeper concern to the Anglican authorities!

The *Church Times* said (Nov. 18th, 1921) in an article on "*Dr. Gore and Liberal Catholicism*": "We cannot conceive a Church of England that will not contain Catholics, Protestants and Modernists. But Dr. Gore forces us to realize that Catholics may at any time be faced with a position that is intolerable, either from the Modernist or from the pan-Protestant side." Unfortunately the "odium theologicum" of Protestantism against Catholic truth is so strong that "pan-Protestantism" is quite ready to make an alliance with Modernists who reject the Divinity of Our Lord in order to make common protest against the Anglo-Catholics, because of their belief in the Mass, Confession and Devotion to Our Lady.

The *Church Times* quoted the effect on the Modernists of this 1922 Convocation meeting of Bishops. "The issue of the Controversy (say the *Modern Churchman* in the draft of an official document) inspires us with hope for the future of the Church of England. The highest Ecclesiastical authorities have, in effect, pronounced that the mystery of Christology . . . is not a closed subject, but is open to earnest and reverent enquiry. The great problems which the Fathers of the first six centuries strove so zealously to solve, are still our problems. We are not bound by their admittedly imperfect solutions."

Who and what is Christ? The Modernists declare that till they arrived upon the scene to solve the problem there was no reliable answer to this question. Indeed they make it clear that they believe the answer given by the Councils of the Church to have been a false answer. With a strange lack of modesty these men declare themselves to be the successors of the great Fathers and Doctors of the Church, correcting and supplementing their imperfect work. Canon Glazebrook claims: "The true successors of the Fathers of the Church are not the ecclesiastics who for long ages held on to the unchanging tradition but those who in recent times have applied the best modern thought in order to interpret the Divine Master to their con-

temporaries. Such were the great series of German philosophers from Kant to Lotze. Such are those in our own day who are steadily and reverently facing the task which the 5th century left unaccomplished."¹

The Church of England was "at the parting of the ways" in 1922. Is she still there? Or has she turned down the left path with Modernism, committed to a toleration of the denial of the Divinity of Christ? A leading spirit of the Cambridge Conference was recently rewarded for his scholarship by the bishopric of Birmingham and was consecrated by his Anglican colleagues. The most uncompromising and outspoken member of the Conference, the editor of the *Modern Churchman* review which exists to record and disseminate the heretical views of Modernists, still holds the post of Principal of the Anglican Theological College, Ripon Hall, Oxford. Was it this broad toleration of heresy by his Church authorities that inspired Dean Inge's epigrammatic gibe against the Anglican Bishops? "Even a Bishop," he said, "would only expostulate mildly if he were told that he was no Christian, but would be very angry if he were told he was no gentleman. This is not true of Roman Catholics . . ."²

At the end of the Cambridge Conference, Canon Barnes, the present Bishop of Birmingham, made an appeal in his sermon on behalf of Ripon Hall. Here are one or two passages from the address:

"No cause more urgently needs support than the endeavour to provide properly trained ministers in our Church. Could you provide Ripon Hall with such funds that no boy of suitable gifts, however poor, was prevented from receiving a good preliminary education and training within its walls? . . . Teach your friends, for their own sakes and for Christ's sake,

¹ Conf. No. 1921, p. 204.

² *Royal Magazine*, Christmas Number, 1923. "What life has taught me," p. 196. The unorthodoxy of his bishop must often cause sorrow and disquiet to a sincere Anglo-Catholic. Such a one said to a convert friend of the author on the day of his reception into the Church, "What a comfort to be of the same religion as your bishop!" To us it seems that more than mere comfort is involved in the situation.

to give more than they think they can afford *to spread faith in Christ* throughout the land."¹

What sort of "faith in Christ" emanates from theological seminaries of the Ripon Hall type? Who and what is the Christ of Modernism? I can only give you briefly some of the conclusions arrived at by extreme Modernists, a summary of their reply to the question so clearly answered by the Nicene Creed.

Who is Christ? When we say "who," we are asking for an account of His *personality*. The answer of the Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Churches is clear. He is the Only Begotten, Eternal, Son of God, equal to the Father in His Divine Personality. He has a human nature through His Incarnation in time, but no human personality. He is a single Person—not two persons intimately associated. Modernism agrees that He has a single personality: but declares He is not God. His is a *purely human personality*. The Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity at Cambridge declared at the Girton Conference: "We must absolutely jettison the traditional doctrine that His personality was not human but divine." He adds: "I do not for a moment suppose that Jesus ever thought of Himself as God." He frankly "jettisons" the *traditional* doctrine: the doctrine of the Creeds of the Church.

Dean Rashdall says at the same Conference: "Jesus did not claim Divinity for Himself." The Rev. Professor Kirsopp Lake of Harvard University states: "Jesus never claimed to be divine at all." and goes on to emphasize his statement in these words: "The central doctrine of Catholic theology was unknown to Jesus and to those disciples of Jesus who first recorded His life."²

Jesus never claimed to be divine! Why, He was condemned as a blasphemer by the Sanhedrin precisely because He *did* solemnly make this claim. There was no blasphemy unless the claim had been made and made by one who was not God. This Professor Lake of Harvard is the clergyman from whom I quoted in the last lecture the words: "(The Church

¹ *Modern Churchman*, September, 1921, p. 348.

² *Hibbert Journal*, October, 1924.

of the future) will not require as a condition of membership that we should accept any opinion about Jesus, *not even His own.*"¹

The Modernist, then, will not call Christ God. If he allow the adjective "divine" to be applied to Him, it is in an improper sense and in the same sense in which it is also applied to us mere men in a lesser degree.

Dr. Sparrow Simpson summarises the Modernist teaching and explains the limited sense in which the word "divine" is applied to Him Whom Modernists deny to be God. He writes: "Modernism . . . maintains that the personality of Jesus is human and not divine, although, in a sense, on the ground of His moral excellence He may be called divine: that Incarnation does not mean the entrance of Deity into human conditions and human experience, but the inspiration of a man by the infusion of divine gifts: and if Jesus be said to be 'equal to the Father' this must be understood of His moral character and not of essential being."²

In one of the papers read at the Cambridge Conference we are told: "That we are justified in thinking of God as like Christ, that the character and teaching of Christ contains the fullest disclosure both of the character of God Himself and of His will for man, that is (so far as so momentous a truth can be summed up in a few words) the true meaning to us of the doctrine of Christ's Divinity." But all this could be said of a mere man of the highest moral character whom the Holy Spirit inspired with a message for mankind. It would not involve an Incarnation.

We are told by Dr. Major that the "'deity' of Jesus was to be seen in His perfect humanity." . . . "There is not a vast gulf between the Divine Nature and Human Nature. . . . It is this conviction of the close relationship of Deity and Humanity which alone makes the Incarnation credible to the modern man. Jesus reveals this relationship and He also renders possible the attainment of the ideal of Divine Sonship by every man. *We, human beings, have the ineffable*

¹ *Hibbert Journal*, *ibid.*

² "Modernism and the Person of Christ," p. 10.

and incomprehensible privilege of being potentially sons of God."¹

Martineau, the Unitarian, had already said : " The Incarnation is not true of Christ exclusively, but of man universally." Christ then was, at most, but an adopted Son of God, just as all Christians are through grace.

Dr. Major tells us what he believes Our Lord's own claim to be. " Let it be clearly realized that Jesus Himself did not claim to be the Son of God in a metaphysical sense such as is required by Nicene Theology (i.e., the Creed). He claimed to be God's Son in a moral sense, *in the sense in which all human beings are Sons of God*, i.e., as standing in a filial and moral relationship to God, and as capable of acting on those moral principles on which God acts."²

With regard to the pre-existence of Christ before the Incarnation, Mr. Major gives his views in a characteristic passage : " Did Jesus claim pre-existent consciousness and knowledge? The fourth Gospel answers ' Yes ' quite clearly and firmly. Dare we answer : ' No ' ? Wordsworth's Ode to Immortality teaches that *every human infant* brings this pre-existent knowledge with it into this world at its birth."³

Does anyone suppose that Dr. Major seriously believes that children born into the world *pre-existed* as conscious individuals? Most Modernists are extreme Evolutionists and they would find it difficult to see an expression of the doctrines of Evolution in Wordsworth's lines :

" Not in entire forgetfulness
And not in utter nakedness
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God Who is our home."

These lines are not quite the best way of pointing to " brute ancestry " !

" Divine Sonship " such as is conceded to Christ by Modernists does not bring with it the divine qualities of personal Omniscience and Omnipotence, and we find Modernists almost unanimous in denying Him these

¹ Conf. No. September, 1921, p. 196.

² *Ibid.*, p. 276.

³ Conf. No. 1921, p. 277.

powers. A Catholic knows that Christ as God had all the knowledge of God and that all that was communicable of this Divine Knowledge was communicated to His human soul. This Soul of Christ was linked to His Divine personality by the mysterious Hypostatic Union of the two Natures involved in the Incarnation of the Son of God. The past, present and future lay before Him at every moment of His earthly life, for such knowledge was communicable to a human soul. Some of this knowledge was to be shared with us, and some of it was, by His Father's Will, to be kept from us even though it were possible for us to accept and understand, should it have been the Divine Plan to reveal these secrets to men. The hour of His second Coming, for example, was one of these secrets, and Jesus' "ignorance" of that hour was not real ignorance but only a "withheld knowledge." It was under the aspect of the Divine Teacher that one could say "He knew not the hour"; He knew not as the Father's messenger to men, "with communicable knowledge." Through missing this meaning of a puzzling phrase on the lips of Christ, Modernists have come to deny to Him any more knowledge than an ordinary Jew of His time would have been expected to possess.

Dean Rashdall says: "The Divinity of Christ does not imply Omniscience"¹—but "divinity" has lost its meaning on the lips of Modernists, and so does not carry with it its inseparable attributes when it has assumed a human nature to union with itself.

The Dean also says: "There is no more reason for supposing that Jesus of Nazareth knew more than His contemporaries about the true scientific explanation of mental diseases which current belief attributed to diabolic possession, than He knew more about the authorship of the Psalms and the Pentateuch."²

Because of an abbreviated report of a sermon of Our Lord's in which He prophesied the destruction of Jerusalem and also the Last Judgment—the Evangelists' account not clearly separating these two prophecies—Modernists are convinced that Our Lord

¹ Conf. No. 1921.

² Conf. No. 1921, p. 281.

expected the end of the world within a few years, and *on this ground alone* would cut out of the Gospels the texts which speak of the founding of the Church and the preaching of the Gospel to the whole world. "He believed that the end of the age was at hand," writes one Modernist. An "apocalyptic Christ" who believed this could not have planned a Catholic Church for the world or said to Peter, "Upon this rock I will build my Church"!

"The consciousness of Jesus was a full human consciousness: it was not supernatural or miraculous in any sense that cannot be attributed to a human human personality. The consciousness of Jesus was conditioned just as ours is. It was subject to limitation and growth. His knowledge of God was dependent upon His moral loyalty to the Divine Will," writes Dr. Major. "As to His Passion and Death," says the same Modernist, "it seems to me impossible to guess how long beforehand He foresaw them."¹

"Our Lord entertained some expectations about the future which history has not verified," said Dean Rashdall of Carlisle (*ib.*, p. 281). Christ's limited knowledge, according to Modernists, lessens His power to guide and weakens the authority of His teaching. For them, the fact that Christ has taught something, does not settle the question for all time. Dr. Kirsopp Lake says²: "The religion of to-morrow will assuredly have much to say as to conduct; but it will have to work out its problems in its own way, not by trying to find a short cut to their solution in the teaching of Jesus or anyone else."³

¹ Conf. No. 1921, pp. 277, 266.

² *Hibbert Journal*, October, 1924.

³ In an important article in the *Church Times* (February 27th, 1925), on "The English Church. A parting of the Ways?" Bishop Talbot of Pretoria seems definitely to side with the Modernists in denying Omniscience to Christ. He says: "I protest that there is nothing incompatible with the firmest belief in the Incarnation, to recognize that Our Lord, in taking human nature at a certain time and place in history, shared the general knowledge, science, and mental furniture of His generation. Certainly the mystery of the Union of the Divine with the human is supremely a subject for reverent agnosticism. But to ascribe to Our Lord, in the days of His Flesh, an omniscience as regards modern scientific and critical questions is to fall disastrously into the heresy to which the devotional mind is ever most prone—namely, Docetism. He did truly become

"According to our earliest Gospel (St. Mark) it was not until His Baptism, when he was about 30 years old, that He became clearly conscious of His Messiahship."¹ Here is another of Dr. Major's statements and one that we shall examine more at length as an illustration of the Modernist methods of criticism—the methods which have carried them away from the Christ of the Creeds to a Christ Who is not God, Who was ignorant of many things and made many mistakes through His ignorance.

The three Synoptists all recount the Baptism of Christ, when a voice from Heaven proclaimed—"Thou art My Beloved Son, in Thee I am well pleased"; or in the form in which the words are reported in St. Matthew, "This is My Beloved Son in Whom I am well pleased."

One law of Modernism—the rejection of Miracle—we shall examine presently. Here we have another and very widely applied law of criticism at work. Because the earliest Gospel—St. Mark—recounts the Baptism of Christ and records the Voice from Heaven declaring His Sonship, the Modernists see in this *the first revelation of that Sonship to Christ Himself*, and declare that until His Baptism He had no idea that He was a Son of God—the Messiah. But this revelation may equally well be regarded as a revelation given to St. John the Baptist or to the bystanders. Nay, further, we have in St. Luke the clear testimony that already Jesus knew His relationship to the Father at the age of twelve, when He replied to Mary, "Did you not know that I must be about My Father's man. To suppose that He knew everything as man is to destroy His manhood."

In the previous paragraph Dr. Talbot says: "It remains to acknowledge that the 'Great Divide' does seem to shut us off from Our Lord (and St. Paul). If the background of the story of man, as now unrolled, was unknown to Our Lord, *as we can hardly doubt*, does that mean that in loyalty to Him we must cling to the uncritical view of the Old Testament? Because He referred to Adam and Eve, does that mean that they are historical figures? Because He referred to Lot's wife, does that mean that she was really petrified into a pillar of salt?" (p. 253). Are we then to believe that Modernism knows more about Adam and original sin than Christ, the second Adam, who came to make the Atonement for that sin?

¹ Conf. No. 1921, p. 271.

business?" In these words Jesus reveals His consciousness of an unique relationship to God. Jewish boys did not speak of God as "my Father" as do Christians. It is by the revelation and graces given to Christians by Christ that this gracious title has been made known to us and the right to say "Abba Father" communicated to His brethren. Modernists, however, do not believe in the objective reality of the manifestation from Heaven at the Baptism. They build up from their "new psychology" a fantastic speculation as to the source and the effect of a purely interior, subjective experience on the mentality of the young Jewish ecstatic. A Modernist's God may not intervene *objectively* and miraculously in the world He wishes to redeem! God is, for the Modernists, much the same as He is to the Deists.

But once suppose that the voice from Heaven was real and objective, and suppose it was not meant primarily for Christ but for St. John the Baptist or the bystanders—and the whole Modernist theory falls to the ground.

Another principle of Modernist criticism is an unbalanced use of the "argument from silence." It practically comes to this, in their hands—whatever is omitted from a Sacred Writer's narrative must be considered as unknown to him. Let me illustrate by the doctrine of the Virgin Birth. Our earliest written records in the New Testament are some of the Epistles of St. Paul. Now St. Paul does not mention the Virgin Birth. Hence, the Modernists conclude, the Virgin Birth was not in the primitive tradition and must have been invented after St. Paul's time. St. Paul "knew nothing about it," they declare. But all we know about the Virgin Birth comes from the testimony of St. Luke and St. Luke was the companion and friend of St. Paul. Surely it is impossible for us to believe that St. Luke never mentioned this wonderful fact to his friend and the companion of his journeys. Though unrecorded by St. Paul it cannot have been unknown to him. St. John, the latest evangelist, must have written with St. Luke's Gospel before him, yet he also is silent about the Virgin Birth. Surely it is impossible to believe that he was ignorant of

that event? Yet on Modernist theories his silence proves his ignorance.

Again, with regard to the Bodily Resurrection of Our Lord.¹ Modernists declare that St. Paul knows nothing of "an empty tomb" because he does not mention it in the brief summary of the apparitions of Christ which he gives, ending up with "Last of all He appeared to me as one born out of due time." St. Paul does not go into details—as do the others—but merely states "He appeared." Now, say Modernists, the apparition of Christ to St. Paul was merely a "vision" or apparition of a "ghost" of the "soul" of Christ which survived death. This, they declare, is the primitive reliable story and those who wrote later must have *invented* all the rest—the empty tomb, the account of Jesus eating with the Apostles and finally the scene of Thomas touching the wounds and making his grand declaration of Faith "My Lord and my God." The fact that St. Paul only gives us what he himself received by revelation and only a *part* of that in his letters does not necessarily invalidate the detailed testimony of eye-witnesses or destroy the authentic streams of tradition from other sources which we have in the four Gospels.

And it seems forgotten by these critics that St. Paul's letters are but fragmentary and occasional comments,² called for by particular needs of the Churches he had

¹ "We owe much to St. Luke and St. John, but when we compare their view of the Resurrection with the earlier view of St. Paul, we cannot but feel that these writers have departed from the primitive tradition by the addition of unhistorical details. It would seem that the earliest tradition, before St. Mark's Gospel was written, knew nothing of an empty tomb. St. Mark's, the earliest Gospel, tells us that the tomb was empty. Therefore, between St. Paul's conversion and the appearance of St. Mark's Gospel the story of the empty tomb must have arisen. . . . St. Paul believed that Christ was alive because he and others like St. Stephen had had visions of Christ. The evangelists believed that Christ was alive because they believed that the tomb was empty. It was the latter tradition which drew to itself the legendary details of a bodily resurrection and in course of time well nigh ousted the earlier view. . . . If St. Paul built his faith on spiritual experience, surely ours can need no other foundation."—*Modern Churchman*, December, 1924, p. 533.

² A reviewer, however, in the March number of the *Modern Churchman* (1925) says: "In studying the mind of Paul, we need to remember not merely the peculiarity of the Apostle's experience and mental outlook, but in addition *the essentially occasional character of the Pauline letters*," p. 700.

founded and in which he had orally taught the whole faith. The letters were not complete catechisms or theological treatises of the Christian's entire creed. One instance may show the danger of denying anything to be of the primitive tradition unless it has been recorded by St. Paul in his letters. Had there not been misbehaviour at the meetings of the Corinthians for the celebration of the Eucharist, it is extremely likely that St. Paul would never have mentioned the Last Supper and the Institution of the Holy Mass and Holy Communion. He only alludes to it in one letter. Had the Corinthians behaved better and had there been no abuse to correct, the Modernists would be saying to-day: "St. Paul knows nothing of the Eucharist: it must have been *invented* after his time and inserted illegitimately into the Gospels by the later Evangelists. It is not part of the primitive faith of the Church."

This we are sure: St. Paul preached the Gospel and taught his converts that "even if an angel from Heaven" taught them a Gospel other than the one he had preached to them, they were to reject it. Such Churches were not likely to accept any new unfounded legends as part of Christian truth. Unless the history as it appeared written by the Synoptists and as later it appeared in the fourth Gospel agreed with what they had heard preached to them by the Apostle Paul, they would never have accepted it.

This idea of a Gospel growing out of unfounded myth or legend does not fit in with what we know of the early Christian tenacity. The faithful clung to the primitive oral teaching and passed it on unchanged to their children as they received it.

The analysis by Modernists of the Gospel into a primitive record and the developed and added theological speculations of the fourth Evangelist, is a purely arbitrary and a really unscientific method of reconstructing the primitive beliefs of Christians about Christ.

Modernists have approached their work of criticism as surgeons approach their operations. They know what has to be cut out. Modernists must, according to their principles, cut out all miracle and the genuine supernatural. What then remains they declare to be healthy fact-tissue—true history. The Christ of

Modernism is what they believe to be left after this radical operation has been performed on the Gospels.

In our next lecture we shall deal with miracles more at length, but it is well for us in studying the Modernist Christ to remember how this figure has been built up—this “perfectly human non-miraculous Christ,” born of earthly father and mother; this visionary who believed Himself to be a Messiah, Who was executed, and Whose body corrupted and fell to dust in the tomb; Who never worked a real miracle—yet Whose followers converted the world to Christianity, and won it over to their assured belief that He was the Son of God risen gloriously from the tomb after His death upon the Cross.

Bishop Gore says of the rationalistic critics: “These critics approach their task with a strong bias, having determined that *there can occur no real miracles*, so that they are bound to reject any strictly miraculous incidents. . . . A critic of the Gospels who refuses miracles is bound to be revolutionary.”¹

Bishop Creighton, a weighty authority and one, like Bishop Gore, who has studied deeply the works of these critics, has said the same thing: “The destructive criticism of the New Testament rests on the supposition that miracles do not happen.” In our next lecture we shall see how arbitrary and unproved an assumption is this principle of the critics.

Modern professors of the science of history make this denial of miracle a law of criticism, so much a rule of thumb that they declare it a waste of time for a historian to weigh up the evidence for an alleged miracle. Just as we know that there cannot be a “square circle,” so these men know *a priori* that there cannot be a miracle. Thus, the Gospel history has been rewritten and is still being rewritten by Modernists who apply their accepted principle of criticism that the miraculous and true supernatural must be ruthlessly rejected by the historian. It is now a law of their science. To the Modernist, I repeat, miracle is as a malignant growth to be carefully cut out of the Gospel record—as a surgeon cuts out every trace of cancerous tissue—and the residue alone may be accepted as historical.

¹ Religion of the Church, p. 149.

But miracle and the supernatural are the very heart and vitals of the Gospel and the Christian Creeds founded on them. No application of new psychology or psycho-analysis can reconstruct and galvanize into a semblance of life the corpse of Christian revelation that results from this radical dissection by rationalistic critics. The Christ of Modernist History cannot replace the Divine Christ of the Gospels, the Christ of the Creeds and the Christ of the Christian experience throughout the centuries. The Christ of Modernism is a monstrosity—a caricature of the real Founder of the Christian Church. Had Christ been in reality what the Modernist reconstruction makes Him, there would be no Christian Church in the world to-day.

The civilized world has pulsed for centuries with life and youth and strength and love and self-sacrifice ; with the heroism of martyrdom and sanctity of mysticism, all through the ever-living influence of the Christ Who is God. The world will "grow grey" and feeble and lifeless where the new-found Christ of Modernism supplants in the minds of a people the living Christ of the uncensored and unexpurgated Gospels. This pragmatic test has still to be applied ; and it will, I confidently prophesy, show that the modernist Christ fails utterly as a power to guide and inspire mankind.

Contrast the Christmas religious experience of the Catholic with the Christmas thoughts of the rationalistic Modernist. The latter sees in Christmas but the birthday of a Jewish child, a helpless, unthinking babe with no eternal pre-existence preceding its birth, with no divine power or prophetic knowledge of what Bethlehem and Christmas night will mean for Christians in the ages to come. To such a man, a Bambino lying on the straw of a crib in a Catholic church is linked with little in the way of spiritual or religious experiences.¹

But the Catholic, kneeling and meditating by the Crib, finds in his faith the motive of his tenderest love

¹ In an article in *The Expositor* for December, 1924, by H. J. Flowers, occurs the following passage (p. 428) :

"Adoration to the Child Jesus is fraught with the greatest dangers to our religious life. The person who saved the world and gave commands to it, and a message of love, was a man and not a baby. The thought shared by more people than we are apt to imagine, the thought, namely, that while Jesus was a babe at His mother's

and deepest adoring gratitude. His sure faith reaches back to Bethlehem over the ages, as the Divine foreknowledge of the Babe of Bethlehem stretched forward to the twentieth century. That Babe was the Only Begotten, Eternal Son of God. His Omniscience, and His prophetic Soul, looked out from Bethlehem to every Crib that loving hands would construct in the centuries to come. He saw each Bambino that would lie with open arms upon the straw, carrying the message of His love for all over the Catholic world throughout the lifetime of the Church. Not a man, woman or child (let us not forget the children peering into the Crib, and learning the meaning of the Babe of Bethlehem's love when they have only just ceased to be babes themselves!), not a single one, but He knew him individually and loved him individually on that first Christmas night and came from Heaven "emptying Himself out" for love of him—for love of *you* and *me*—as truly as He came for Mary and Joseph and the happy shepherds whom His Angels summoned from their flocks to His manger throne.

"He loved *me* and delivered Himself for *me*," boasted Paul the Apostle, who had never seen Christ till He was ascended to the Father Who had sent Him forth. "He loved *me* and delivered Himself for *me*, and came down from Heaven because He knew *I* should need Him in a later age"—is the thought that warms the heart, and perchance brings happy tears to our eyes on Christmas night. It is from the Christ of the Gospels, the God-Christ of the Christian Creeds, that this satisfying experience springs which is such a power in our lives.

The Christ of Modernism—stripped of His Godhead and His divine powers of miracle—can never so win the hearts and guide the lives of men; nor could He have been the "God-Man" Victim Who was needed to make full atonement to God for the sins of Adam's fallen race.

breast, He was also God over all the world, *is as revolting to our intellect as it is against the plain teaching of Scripture*. We celebrate Christmas, because of a natural tendency to regard as sacred the day upon which the Saviour of men was born; we are distorting a festival into a day of *idol worship*, if we go beyond the mere act of commemorating the birth and begin to *adore the child*."

LECTURE III

MODERNISM AND MIRACLE

IN the present lecture we dig down to the bed-rock foundation of Modernist scepticism, its often unreasoning and always unreasonable rejection of miracles. The whole edifice of unbelief in the Christ of the Creeds rests upon the pre-supposition, the "groundless assumption" as Principal Shairp calls it, that miracles *do* not happen, never *have* happened, and, indeed, never *can* happen.

As we saw in our first lecture, Modernists disbelieve all those articles of the Creed which involve mystery and miracle; and, because they are obliged to recite the Creeds as ministers of Christian churches, they use the strangely disingenuous principle of casuistry that they may honestly affirm these Creeds because, as they regard the articles as false, they cannot be expressions of the fundamentals of the Faith and so *should* not be contained in the Creeds.

In the last lecture we saw that the Christ of extreme Modernism is not regarded as "God of God," the pre-existing, Only-begotten Son of the Father, miraculously Incarnate and born of a Virgin Mother. He was just a Jewish carpenter who was inspired by God to help mankind to civilization by preaching the heavenly truths taught him in his own unique religious experience. He was not even a *miraculously* authenticated prophet.

We now turn to study more closely this matter of miracles. We need not here plunge into the intricacies of Kantian or Hegelian theories of knowledge, though these theories have possibly much to do with the initial objection to mystery and miracle. We shall examine the reasons which some Modernists give for their rejection of these manifestations of the supernatural; and, also, I hope, show how unreasonable is

that *a priori* denial of the possibility of miracle which is characteristic of most Modernist writings.¹

The rationalist Renan states clearly this law of historical criticism which has been adopted by most Modernists. Renan writes: "It is evident that the Gospels are, in part, legendary because they are interlarded with miracles and the supernatural." And again: "I say that the Gospels are legends, not because it has been proved to me that the Gospels do not deserve an unqualified belief but *because they narrate miracles*." Or, again: "That which guides us in the difficult paths of criticism is the principle, for us indisputable, *that the supernatural is impossible*. We do not discuss the supernatural, for it is impossible."²

Strauss the real founder of the school of German critics, and Harnack its weightiest later authority, both agree with Renan.

The English philosopher Hume³ had previously laid down a law of criticism in these words: "We may establish *as a maxim* that no human testimony can have force to prove a miracle and make it a just foundation of any system of theology." And elsewhere: "What have we to oppose to a cloud of witnesses (testifying to a miracle) but the *absolute impossibility or miraculous nature* of the events they relate; and this surely in the eyes of all reasonable people will be regarded as a sufficient refutation."

If Hume is right in implying that "absolutely impossible" and "miraculous nature" are synonyms, the question is settled once and for all. If the miraculous is an absolutely impossible, unthinkable, self-contradictory thing like a "square circle" or a "holy blasphemy," then there is no use examining witnesses who assert that they have witnessed a miracle. We

¹ In his Presidential address at the Modern Churchmen's Conference at Oxford, 1924, Dean Inge said: "We of the Churchmen's Union come into conflict with traditionalism chiefly on the question of miracle, and this for many is the meaning of the conflict between religion and science" (Conf. No. p. 227). It may be of interest to note that in March, 1925, the membership of the Union totalled 1,148, of whom 422 were clerical and 726 lay members.

² "Vie de Jesus,"

³ *Essays*, p. 535.

should know *a priori* that it cannot have taken place and no evidence could suffice to prove it. Now, Modernists seem to regard miracles in this light and so, even before they examine the Gospel critically as historians, they know that it must be expurgated of miracle and the true supernatural. Renan says: "The denial of the miraculous and of the inspiration of Scripture is not, with us, the *result* of exegesis: these denials precede all exegesis."¹

Huxley in his volume on Hume (p. 131) attempted to prove *a priori* that the supernatural was a self-contradictory notion, but he could only do so on his supposition, which Modernists reject, that there was nothing outside or above Nature, and hence no "super-natural." To give a semblance of reason to his argument, he had to give a definition to Nature which made it the "sum total of reality," and he went on to define reality as the sum total of the "phenomena presented to our experience."² But there *is* a God and He is real, although He is not an object of sense, a "phenomenon."

John Stuart Mill is much more scientific and reasonable when he says: "We cannot conclude absolutely that the miraculous theory must be at once rejected. Once admit a God and the production of an effect by His direct volition must be reckoned with as a serious possibility."³ Principal Shairp sums up the situation in the following common sense-passage: "The statement that miracles are in themselves impossible being a *wholly groundless assumption*, the question of their actual occurrence becomes one of purely historical evidence."⁴ By most Rationalists and Modernists, the purely historical evidence is judged, before examination, to be worthless, *because* it testifies to the supernatural.

¹ *Vie de Jesus*, pref.

² *Hume*, p. 131. Yet elsewhere Huxley writes—with saner judgment—"No one is entitled to say *a priori* that any given so-called miraculous event is impossible" (*Collected Essays*, Vol. V. p. 138). Anatole France gives the same naïve proof as Huxley "Si cela est, cela est dans la nature et par conséquent naturel." The "*petitio principii*" is obvious."

³ *Essays on Religion*, p. 230.

⁴ *Culture and Religion*, p. 117.

Two classes of philosophers necessarily exclude the possibility of miracles ; it is quite logical for them to do so on the principles they have adopted ; these are the Pantheists and the Deists.

Modernists would generally refuse to be placed in either of these categories, though many of the things they write lay them open to the charge of being sometimes in one and sometimes in the other class. Pantheists exaggerate the Immanence of God and deny Him freewill. Spinoza said :¹ "The universal laws of nature are merely decrees of God which result from the necessity and perfection of the divine Nature." Many Modernists appeal to the perfection of God as a reason for their rejection of His miraculous intervention in His creation. We shall examine some of their arguments presently.

Deists have a conception of a far away, unapproachable God, Who is, by His very perfection, incapable of interesting Himself in man and is prevented by His very aloofness from hearing prayers or answering them. Thus the Deists exaggerate the Transcendence of God. The Catholic truth stands between these two extremes—Pantheism and Deism—and keeps the balance between them in describing the manifestation of both the Divine Immanence and Transcendence in its explanation of the relation of creature to Creator.

A Catholic believes in physical laws and physical necessity, but he deduces both from the *Free Will*, and not from the *Necessary Being* of God. On the other hand, metaphysical and mathematical laws are absolutely and always necessary. To deny this would involve contradiction in terms. They are not

¹ "Sequitur leges naturæ universales mera esse decreta Dei, quæ *ex necessitate* et perfectione naturæ divinæ sequuntur. Potentia naturæ (est) ipsa divina potentia et virtus, divina autem potentia (est) ipsissima Dei essentia" (T.2, p. 24). The Divine Power is identified, as is the Divine Will, with God's necessary Being or Essence ; but the objects effected by that Power and Will are not identified with God's Essence and do not share its absolute Necessity. God *must* have a Will that is Free 'ad extra,' and the uniformities decreed by God's Will, which are the Laws of Nature, are the effect of the free decree of a Will that is itself a necessary Perfection of the Divine Being. Nor are *secondary* causes identified with the *First* cause as Pantheism asserts.

subject to exception by miracle. Physical laws have only a "contingent necessity," as they depend on God's Free Will.

God's Omnipotence is not lessened because He cannot reverse mathematical truths, for their necessity is radically founded on His own perfections. God is not less powerful because He cannot make 2 plus 2 equal 5, or cannot create "square circles," or make blasphemy a virtue. But to deny God the power to perform a physical miracle *is* to deny Him Omnipotence. If the Creator of Life cannot for a wise and loving moral purpose restore life to the dead, He would not be God.

Huxley seems to confuse these orders of truth when he writes in a letter to C. Kingsley¹:—"I know nothing of Necessity, abominate the word Law (except as meaning that we know nothing to the contrary) and am quite ready to believe that there may be some place where 2 plus 2 equals 5, and all bodies naturally repel one another instead of gravitating together."

Though Modernists reject Huxley's materialism, many seem still under the influence of the illogical conclusions of materialism, and nearly all show signs of the confusion of mind which results from not distinguishing different orders of truth and necessity. We shall see instances of this in the course of the present lecture.

An important truth which we must bear in mind when considering the matter of miracle is that God decrees *both* the physical uniformity which we call the laws of nature and the particular exceptions to that uniformity, i.e., miracles, by the same eternal, all-wise, free act of His Will. Miracles are interruptions of Nature's *effects* rather than violations of law. Aquinas writes: "Although God may produce an effect outside the working of its natural cause, He in no way abolishes the regular relation of this cause to effect."²

¹ Autobiography.

² G. Tyrrell writes: "The *miraculous* conception of the matter implies that God, by some sort of self-limitation, leaves His position as first and ultimate cause and takes the place of some finite and secondary cause, whose intervention is dispensed with for the

Miracles are thus to be conceived as leaving the physical laws still in existence while, either by the withholding of the Divine concurrence which is necessary for the effective activity of secondary causes, or by some quasi-creative supplementary activity, God produces the miraculous effect.

When Aquinas declares that "a thing is called a miracle which is performed outside the order of the whole created nature," he is describing such a divine intervention. Dr. McCulloch says¹ "We define a miracle as an occasional evidence of direct divine power in an action, striking and unusual yet by its beneficence pointing to the goodness of God." He here indicates one purpose of miracle which it is essential to bear in mind if we would study this subject with any prospect of understanding it aright.

Cardinal Newman gives us the key to the problem when he reminds us that "a great moral purpose may be effected by an interruption of physical order."

"The miracles of Scripture are irregularities in the economy of nature, but with a moral end. . . . Thus, while they are exceptions to the laws of one system, they may coincide with those of another. They profess to be the evidence of a Revelation, the criterion of a divine message. To consider them as mere exceptions to a physical order, is to take a very incomplete view of them. . . . As naked and isolated facts they do but deform an harmonious system."

Again: "When the various antecedent objections which ingenious men have urged against miracles are brought together, they will be found nearly all to

occasion. That, I take it, is the theological definition of a strict miracle" (The Church of the Future, Appendix 9). The miraculous intervention is in no sense a "self-limitation," nor is there any degradation to the level of a secondary cause involved in God's miraculous action when He dispenses with a secondary cause for some moral purpose on a particular occasion. God does not act *in the manner* of a secondary cause when He directly supplies the efficiency of that cause. Whether God is co-operating with a secondary cause or dispensing with it, there is no subjective change in God. The *effects* differ, but they proceed from the same unchanging perfection of God's Omnipotent Will.

¹ In Hastings Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, sub. "Miracle."

arise from forgetfulness of the existence of moral laws. Miracles are presented to us, not as unconnected and unmeaning occurrences, but as holding a place in an extensive plan of Divine government, completing the moral system, connecting Man and his Maker, and introducing him to the means of securing his happiness in another and eternal state of being."¹

Here, if anywhere, it is necessary to take a *qualitative* rather than a *quantitative* view of the matter when forming our conclusions. Many Modernists, Dean Inge among the rest, speak as if Copernicus had pulled down the whole edifice of supernatural Christianity by his discovery that the earth was not the local centre of the universe. Yet, if the earth is alone the dwelling place of human souls, and if the earth alone was the scene of a divine Incarnation, those facts make it the *real moral centre* of creation. *Quantitatively* it is a mere speck of dust, but *qualitatively* it is immense in these scales of true values².

A diamond the size of an egg is many times "greater" than a load of coal! The spiritual good of a single soul may weigh more in the mind of God than the rhythmic perfection exhibited in an absolutely unbroken uniformity in Nature throughout its entire lifetime.

This truth is beautifully expressed by Dr. Carnegie Simpson. He writes: "There is a spiritual interest at stake in this small world, and it therefore is not a small world to a God who knows the true proportionate value of the material and the moral. . . . No conception of God is less imposing than that which represents Him as a kind of millionaire in worlds, so materialised by the immensity of His possessions as to have lost the sense of the incalculably greater worth of the spiritual interest of even the smallest part of them."

Yet a speaker at the Oxford Conference quotes

¹ J. H. Newman "Essay on Miracle," 3rd Ed., pp. 5, 20, 22.

² See Fr. Joseph Rickaby's "In an Indian Abbey," the chapter entitled "Megalomania."

with approval the following words from one of Dr. Beard's Hibbert Lectures : " I say it with the deepest respect for the religious feelings of others, but I cannot but think that the whole system of Atonement of which Anselm is the author, shrivels into inanity amid the light, the space, the silence of the stellar worlds." As though the Omnipotence and Immensity of God stood in the way of a manifestation of Infinite Love such as is revealed in the Incarnation !

One can easily recognise the antecedent probability of miracles on the supposition that God should have decreed the Incarnation and should wish to authenticate a revelation given from Heaven to mankind. Indeed, it is hard to see how, without such miraculous intervention, it would be possible for an Incarnate God to make Himself recognized as more than mere man.

Various objections to the concept of Miracle have been proposed by rationalists and modernists. A. Sabatier, Tyrrell, Loisy, and others infer that miracles would degrade the Creator to the level of a secondary cause. Voltaire and Anatole France state that it would imply either a lack of Wisdom or Omnipotence in God or a condescension that is incompatible with the divine dignity. E. Le Roy will not allow that the possibility of miracle is involved in Omnipotence, and the same writer and Blondel believe that miracle, used as an authentication of a Divine revelation, is too direct, simple and compelling a method, too extrinsic to the truth to be authenticated and to the mind that receives it. Spinoza, Kant, Renan and others declare that miracle would destroy the foundation of all certainty, and react unfavourably on morality.

It seems to us that the Catholic concept of miracle avoids each and all of these conclusions. If one starts from a false idea of the nature of the miraculous, it is easy to argue by *reductio ad absurdum*, and most rationalists and many modernists start with a false idea.

May it not be by some logical nemesis that the Modernism which has on principle eliminated miracle

from the Gospel, has ended by denying the Godhead of Christ, giving to His perfect Humanity a personality of its own and denying to Him anything more than a metaphorical "divinity,"—one shared with men, the same in kind though less in degree. "Christ is divine, but so are we all, at least potentially," is the Modernist message.

Let us then examine some of the reasons which are advanced against the possibility of miracle. For most rationalistic critics, I repeat, this impossibility is not proved, but assumed. Thus for Renan it is an "absolute dogma—an indisputable principle." With Strauss it is a "law of historical criticism." Harnack is "firmly convinced that there can be no such things as miracles." Hume had "established it as a maxim," and used "absolute impossibility or miraculous nature" as synonyms.

However, some Modernist critics of the supernatural *do* attempt to prove their principle. In nearly every case their proof will show a confusion of mind as to what exactly is involved in miracle. Their difficulty will usually vanish before a clear statement as to the true nature of the miraculous.

The Rev. C. F. Russell in one of the papers read at the Oxford 1924 Conference of Modern Churchmen¹, gives his reason for rejecting miracle in the following passage. "To admit miracle," he says, "amounts to saying that the Divine Wisdom which is expressed in the order of Nature was not capable of providing for all emergencies, but is sometimes—to use an everyday phrase—'taken by surprise.' To me, at least, the conception of a God who so needs to intervene is less lofty and worship inspiring than that of one who knows His own mind from all eternity, and whose method in Nature is, like Himself, 'the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.'"

Anatole France similarly believes that miracles would connote an imperfection in God's Work, which would seem to require continual re-adjustments—like a worn-out motor car. He writes: "reconnaissant que Dieu fait de temps en temps des retouches timides

¹ Conf. No. p. 378.

à son œuvre et laissant échapper cet aveu humiliant que la lourde machine qu' il a montée a besoin à toute heure, pour marcher cahin-caha, d'un coup de main du fabricant."¹

This difficulty disappears when one remembers that God's one eternal decree, guided by His Omniscience, effects *both* the uniform law and the miraculous exception. There is no "surprise." The same eternal plan is carried out in the general physical uniformity and in the divinely decreed breach of that uniformity for some divine moral purpose. Miracles are not "divine after-thoughts," or actions suddenly planned to repair an unforeseen accident; nor, again, are they worked "à toute heure."

Nor is there any element of undignified "caprice" in the exceptional treatment of individuals for some loving purpose, or to manifest some divine prerogative. One is surprised at the Provost of Trinity College, Dublin, Professor Mahaffy, having written:²

"If the Deity be recognized as a constitutional monarch who, in His wisdom, has laid down the best laws for the world to obey, the notion of caprice or special legislation or exceptions for any particular reasons becomes more and more inconsistent with the perfection of Wisdom." Voltaire had previously stated this as a difficulty.

Surely this is anthropomorphism gone wild! The Supreme Free Dominion of God *must* transcend that of a "constitutional monarch." Nor is God bound down by rights which creatures can establish against His Dominion. God "owes it to Himself" to behave with love and wisdom and justice in His dealings with His creatures. He does not "owe" to them. The moral purpose of miracle has evidently escaped Prof. Mahaffy, when stating this difficulty.

Paul Sabatier, in his "Vie de S. François d'Assisi," actually affirms miracles to be "immoral" as violating the equality of all men in God's eyes, which he declares to be a "postulate of religious experience." But this equality is not proven; nor is it a postulate

¹ "Le Jardin d'Epicure" p. 209

² *Hibbert Journal*, April, 1923

of the deepest and best religious experience, that of the saints and mystics. The great saints were far from affirming their equality with other souls, but delighted to humble themselves as unworthy of exceptional treatment. But we can well believe that some souls may quite easily be recognized as more fitting subjects for exceptional favours from God than others. In any case, God's freedom is unhampered. Let us not forget the parable of the labourers in the vineyard, and the master's words: "Friend, I do thee no wrong."

Certain scientists seem driven into a panic at the thought of miracle. Chaos would result in the cosmos, they tell us, and all scientific certainty would be at an end if a single miracle be admitted to have happened since the world has been in existence. Thus a speaker at the 1924 Conference said: "If this disturbing factor (miracle) be introduced, the student of natural processes can no longer count upon like causes contributing twice in succession to like results. Nor can he enjoy any confidence that the causes to which he attributes the behaviour of objects are the true causes. Thus the miraculous or supernatural is equivalent, for the man of science, to an incalculable factor which renders accurate and systematic investigations impossible." But these systematic and accurate observations *have* been made, and if we study the history of science we shall see that the vast bulk of its discoveries were made by people who believed in the Gospel miracles. *Solvitur ambulando*. Yet what Tyndall wrote seems still to express the fear of many present-day Modernists. He said: "Assuming the power of free prayer to produce changes in external nature, it necessarily follows that natural laws are more or less at the mercy of man's volition and no conclusion founded on the assumed permanence of these laws would be worthy of confidence"¹ Here Tyndall speaks as if prayer were constantly answered by miracles, and as if these latter were dependent on the whim and wilfulness of man, rather than the wisely pondered decree of the Creator.

¹ *Fragments of Science*, p. 36.

The law of averages and the odds of many trillions to one should allay the fears of these scared scientists! Catholic astronomers, though they believe in the miracles of the Bible, will go confidently across the ocean to some desert island to observe an eclipse. They are not deterred by the knowledge that God *can* prevent its punctual appearance according to the prediction of their science. The probability of the uniformity of nature being broken into by miracle in such cases is practically negligible.

Bishop Lawrence, of Massachusetts, in his "Fifty Years" (p.29) says:—"Modern science had convinced us that a just God would not and could not autocratically break through the laws of nature and work wonders." How the "justice" of God is involved in the matter is not clear, and God *must* act "autocratically." He owes it to His Supreme Dominion to do so. He has not to answer to anyone but Himself for his action. The absolute Autocracy of an infinitely just and good God, is not anything to cause terror to those who serve Him.

In a recent correspondence in an American journal,¹ a well-known Modernist, Rev. Percy Stickney Grant, thus addresses his bishop: "I cannot love God with my mind and at the same time believe that the laws of nature were *ever* violated; for the simple reason that God Himself has taught, me as He is teaching all our sons and daughters in every modern university of the Western World to-day, that those laws are *immutable throughout eternity*." In declaring the laws "immutable throughout eternity" a professor is passing from the sphere of physics to metaphysics, from science to philosophy; and he is at the same time falling into the elementary logical fallacy of arguing "*a non esse*" to "*non posse*," from the fact that a thing does not exist, to the antecedent impossibility of its existence. Often scientists thus overstep their sphere, and they no less often manifest, in the abstract sphere of philosophy, an incapacity to think rationally, while they may show quite excellent powers of observation and classification

¹ *New York Times*, 23rd Jan., 1923.

in dealing with concrete physical facts.¹ And few are so dogmatic as these men when they have left their last. "Ne sutor supra crepidam!" This modern lack of diffidence, this "cocksure" dogmatism in those who often profess to be agnostics, is reproved by no less a personage than George Bernard Shaw in his preface to his "St. Joan." He writes: "Perhaps I had better inform my Protestant readers that the famous dogma of Papal Infallibility is by far the most modest pretension of its kind in existence. Compared to our infallible democracies, our infallible medical councils, our infallible astronomers, our infallible judges, our infallible Parliaments, the Pope is on his knees in the dust confessing his ignorance before the throne of God, asking only that, as to certain historical matters on which he has clearly more sources of information open to him than anyone else, his decision shall be taken as final."

So much by way of a pardonable digression, if digression it be, when we are confronted with the authority of science laying down dogmas as to what has happened in eternity and what powers may be conceded by American University professors of physics to the Creator of the universe!

Another American Modernist, Dr. Leighton Parks, says that belief in miracles "degrades religion from a supreme spiritual experience to an acceptance of

¹ Dean Inge states, and leaves unanswered, a difficulty that must be faced by a scientist who believes the material universe to be eternal *a parte post*, if he would complete his philosophical system. "A difficulty besets science in the law of 'entropy' which demonstrates that the Universe is running down like a clock. This alarming prospect really points to a Creator: for if the Universe is running down, why did it not stop long ago? It must have been wound up at some particular date and whatever wound it up once may presumably wind it up again" (Conf. No. 1924, p. 227). The Dean had just expressed his own belief that "the physical world is *perpetual*, as God is Eternal; boundless as God is Infinite." Believing this, he should logically conclude that God must have already "wound up" the universe not merely "at a particular date," but an infinite number of times. Hence, the scientific Modernist who objects to a single Gospel miracle, worked for a moral purpose before those who witness it, is held to an infinite number of miracles on a colossal scale, worked merely to "wind up" a constantly "running down" creation! The concept of the special divine interventions to create life and man is surely less unreasonable than this.

belief in a non-rational universe.”¹ I fail to see how the Catholic conception of Christianity as, for example, embodied in the “Summa” of Aquinas is non-rational. The caricature of the Catholic scholastic system so often presented by Modernists may be utterly irrational. Nor does Catholic hagiography show any lack of “the supreme spiritual experience” as a result of belief in the Gospel miracles. St. Francis of Assisi, St. Theresa, St. Ignatius of Loyola, all accepted the miraculous Christ, and their spiritual experiences compare very favourably with those revealed in the meagre records of Modernist mysticism!

At the back of nearly all scientific objection to the miraculous is the same fallacious assumption, that all true law and true necessity is metaphysical and absolute; and that therefore any interruption of continuity is unthinkable, self-contradictory, and outside possibility even to an Omnipotent Creator².

“The unity of nature is inviolable,” says Harnack. “A miracle is lawlessness and for this reason it means the abolition of all science based on principles,” writes Duboc. May I repeat here what I have already put forward when giving the Catholic idea of what is in-

¹ “What is Modernism,” p. 33.

² Dean Inge alleges that “the miraculous is welcome to some minds because they dislike law and order” (Conf. No. 1924, p. 227). Many Modernists assert that those who lived in a pre-scientific age admitted miracle only because they were completely ignorant of “law” in the physical world. Thus Loisy (*Revue du Clergé français* 15 Mars, 1900, p. 127) “Au sens de l’antiquité, surtout de l’antiquité biblique, il n’y a pas de cours naturel des choses, parce qu’on, n’a pas l’idée des lois de la nature.” Yet people who lived in the “dark ages” were quite capable of observing the uniformities of nature and the relation of cause to effect even though they may not have commonly used the term “law” to express it. These “ancients” seem to have been more reasonable than modern scientists who recognize “physical laws” but have arbitrarily elevated their necessity to the metaphysical and absolute order. St. Augustine lived in the “pre-scientific” age, yet he writes: “Omnis iste naturæ usitatissimus cursus habet *quasdam naturales leges* suas . . . et elementa mundi hujus corporei habent definitam vim qualitatemque suam, quid unumquodque valeat vel non valeat, quid de quo fieri possit vel non possit . . . Super hunc autem modum cursumque rerum naturalem, potestas creatoris habet apud se, posse facere de his aliud quam eorum quasi seminales rationes habent” (De Gen. I ix c. 17). It would be hard to get from a modern scientist who was also a theologian a clearer exposition of the relation of the “laws of nature” to the Will of God.

volved in natural law. Physical law is only a statement of a divinely imposed uniformity of action; physical necessity is but the obedience of creatures to the Creator's freely chosen decree as to their behaviour. For example, there is nothing in the nature of things and in the concept of matter which requires bodies to attract one another with a force varying inversely as the square of their distance from each other and directly as their masses.¹ But there is something in the nature of a square and that of a circle which makes it impossible even to God's Omnipotence to create a "square circle."

In the latter case there is an antecedent impossibility which is founded on the eternal Truth, while, in the case of all physical laws, their necessity is *subsequent* to and arising from the decree of the Free Will of God. And it is important to remember that the physical necessity and law remains and is not abrogated when a miracle takes place. Nay, more, the existence of the law is essential to the miraculous nature of the fact. "No laws of Nature—then no miracles!"

Hume's² famous theory of the impossibility of establishing by evidence the occurrence of miracle, should such a thing happen, as, he alleges, there is always more evidence against the miracle than can be obtained for it, is seen to lose its force when we observe that the alleged evidence *against* the miracle is merely that which goes to establish the general physical law. But, the same kind of evidence, that of reliable eyewitnesses, is brought forward to prove the miraculous exception to the physical uniformity. Witnesses for the law appeal to their constant experience that dead people do not rise from the dead, and that lepers

¹ M. le Roy says: "Il n'est pas question de difficulté plus ou moins grande, mais de concevabilité. Dieu peut tout sauf l'absurde. Le miracle n'est il pas absurde? Voilà le problème." This lecture attempts to show that the reasons advanced to prove the "absurdity" of miracle, do not avail against that conception of the nature of miracle which is found in Catholic philosophy and theology.

² Hume writes: "A miracle is a violation of the laws of Nature; and, as a firm and unalterable experience has established these laws, the proof against miracle, from the very nature of the fact, is as entire as any argument from experience can possibly be imagined."

are not healed instantly at a word. But eye-witnesses to the fact that Lazarus rose and lepers were healed, appeal also to *their* experience and observation. They know the law, and they record a case where the application of the law has been set aside for a definite moral purpose by the Messiah Who was thus, by miracle, proving Himself to be God's Messenger to mankind. It is not true to say that it is always more probable that the testimony should be false than that the miracle should be a fact. Thus, for example, the only testimony that could be relevant in opposition to the witness of the Apostles to the Bodily Resurrection of Christ, would have been the testimony of eye-witnesses to the dead Body of Christ having remained dead, after He was declared to have been seen and touched by the Apostles. Such evidence is lacking, and the Apostolic testimony stands unrefuted. Hume's argument might as well be used by a taxi-driver in a police-court should he attempt to rebut the evidence of half-a-dozen hostile witnesses who saw an accident, by appealing to the fact that six million people in London did *not* see him run down the pedestrian who is suing for damages !

Perhaps the strongest argument that the opponents of miracle bring forward, and the most plausible, is that in which it is asserted that we have no right to appeal to the Supernatural until we have exhaustively gone through *all* the powers of Nature. This is a task obviously beyond the capacity of any age ; for each succeeding age reveals new possibilities in Nature, unsuspected by those who lived in the centuries that preceded it. It is enough, they say, to mention the discoveries of wireless, and the development of aeroplanes. We are told that a man who could fly or hear things said at a great distance would, a few centuries ago, have been regarded as a miracle-worker. May not the further progress of science explain away the so-called miracles of the Gospel by showing them to be within the powers of nature ? Can we ever be sure that we are in the presence of the real "supernatural" ? As was said at the Oxford Conference, "the incidents of the

Gospel may seem contrary to Nature as we know it, but it would be hazardous to assert that they are contrary to Nature as we may come to know it."

This difficulty is proposed in the name of science, but it is suicidal on the lips of a scientist. Certain laws of nature we *do* know with assured certainty. We are sure that no discovery can invalidate them. Nature would have to change before they could cease to be true, and science proclaims the unchangeableness of Nature. There are certain laws, for example, of biology and pathology which are quite firmly established. No doctor can doubt them. Thus, one may be quite sure that, as long as the human body remains the same, strychnine taken in large quantities will not be its suitable nourishment. Grave organic lesions, we know, *essentially*¹ require time for their natural cure; for multiple biological processes of healing have to be gone through successively before the tissue formation is complete. Thus, a leper who is deformed by his disease cannot be made whole in a moment; and the dead who are really dead cannot become alive again at a word, by the powers of nature, and in accordance with physical law. Yet such is the unreasonable bias against miracle that some Modernists assert that the sudden cure of a leper or the raising of the dead, should they happen, *must* be due to an obscure, seldom operating natural law. This hypothesis would be the death-blow to all science.

A French Modernist writes: "If, in the presence of the professors of the faculty of medicine, a leper should be healed by a word, they would seek for natural causes of the cure, and would in no way see themselves compelled to perceive in this the finger of God." Huxley, through his disbelief in God, was compelled to come to the same conclusion. He wrote:² "If a dead man *did* come to life, the fact would not be evidence that any law of nature had been violated, but that these laws, even when they express a very long

¹ On this subject of organic disease and the "time factor" which is an essential element in its natural cure, see *Medical Proof of the Miraculous*, by Dr. le Bec (Harding & More, London).

² *Hume*, p. 133.

and uniform experience, are necessarily based on incomplete knowledge and are to be held only as grounds of more or less reasonable expectation¹” Surely a conclusion such as this is the bankruptcy of all science! When a law is known to exist, it is paradoxically the man who believes in the possibility of miracle who alone is the one who can cling to his belief in law while admitting the miracle to be a fact. The Catholic believer makes the better scientist. One who denies the possibility of miracle on principle, must give up his belief in physical law as a result of being confronted with a miracle; and he ought logically to renounce his certainty of *all* physical laws as a consequence of meeting with this violation of uniformity in any one case.

The mistake is in the initial denial of the possibility of miracle. Nor is the appeal to the progress of science relevant to the question. It is important to note that such progress, as illustrated in *e.g.* wireless inventions, aseptic discoveries in surgery, etc., leaves the old, certainly established laws still in force. The discoveries are usually supplementary to, not corrective of the old science. The laws that were discovered by Newton still exist. Apples still fall to the ground, and kettles still boil over fires, and for the old reasons—though we have wireless sets for listening-in, and have learnt to fly.

The *vis medicatrix naturae* still works on its old lines in the human body, though we have learnt from Pasteur how to protect it by aseptic methods, and can assist an organic cure by suggestive treatment. Grave organic lesions still heal by successive stages and *essentially* take time, even though the cure may be appreciably helped and hastened within limits, by

¹ A similar sceptical bias is expressed by Anatole France who says that supposing an amputated limb were instantly restored at some sacred shrine. “ Un observateur d’un esprit vraiment scientifique . . . ne dirait pas : Voilà un miracle ! Il dirait : Une observation jusqu’à présent unique tend à faire croire qu’en des circonstances encore indéterminées, les tissus d’une jambe humaine ont la propriété de se reconstituer comme les pinces des homards, . . . mais beaucoup plus rapidement. C’est là un fait de nature ” (Le Jardin d’Epicure).

psycho-therapy. It is important to note that there are definite limits to this "speeding-up" of the cure in organic disease. It cannot *naturally* result in a moment.

With regard to post-apostolic miracles, the miracles recorded in the lives of saints or alleged to have occurred at Lourdes, Catholics have no obligation of their faith to accept any particular one of these. They stand apart from the Gospel miracles, and we are free to weigh up the evidence for ourselves and form our own conclusion as to the facts. Dean Inge says of non-Catholics: "There are few of our ecclesiastics or theologians who would spend five minutes in investigating any alleged supernatural occurrence in our own time. It would be assumed that, if true, it must be ascribed to some obscure natural cause. The result is that the miracles of the New Testament are isolated as they have never been before¹" The Dean holds that "the first article of the Creed of Science is the uniformity of nature." "Miracles must," he says, "be relegated to the sphere of pious opinion. . . . It can never again be possible to make the truths of religion depend on physical portents having taken place as recorded. The Christian revelation can stand without them, and the rulers of the Church will soon have to realize that in very many minds it does stand without them." We remind our readers of what we saw in our last lecture, and of the contrast between the "Christ of the Critics" who have eliminated miracle, and the Christ of the Creeds and the uncensored Gospels. "Christian revelation" on the lips of the Dean means something quite different to that which it stands for to a Catholic.

Time was when the critics removed the miraculous elements from the Gospel record by denying them to be historical fact and describing them as unfounded legends or myths. The earlier German critics of the last century rejected the traditional dates of the composition of the New Testament books. They required and demanded a long time to allow for the growth and acceptance of the myths and legends before their

¹ *Outspoken Essays*, I. p. 123.

incorporation into written records could be explained.

But various discoveries steadily drove back the critics from this front, and to-day they are forced to admit that the dates of composition are practically those assigned by Church tradition. More and more, too, are present-day Modernists returning to belief in the accuracy of the history of the cures wrought by Christ.¹ These cures were rejected by the older critics *en masse*, but to-day it is declared that the knife was used too freely, and that much healthy "fact-tissue" had been cut out along with what was, and still is, regarded as the malignant growth of legendary miracle. "We can give a *natural* explanation to more of the events, therefore we may retain them as good history" is the principle at work, and this principle has no relation to sound exegesis.

Psycho-therapy has made much progress of late years and critics to-day are ready to admit that most of the cures recorded should be retained as historical, but explained away as instances of purely suggestive healing. Christ is regarded to-day as a precocious super-Coué, appearing by some strange freak twenty centuries before his time; a marvellous but not miraculous "spiritual healer." We are told that Harley Street understands Him, imitates His methods and hopes one day to rival His results. Has it needed the phenomena of "shell-shock" in the Great War to teach us at last how to solve the problem of Christ's wonderful healing powers, and give them a purely natural explanation?

Mr. Percy S. Grant, an American Modernist whom we have already quoted, writes: "In the miracles of healing, many of the laws employed by Christ have today been made known to us, but we recognize clearly that such works are not contrary to but in accordance with law." Even Strauss, the founder

¹ One of the speakers at the Oxford Conference says: "It has sometimes been concluded that if certain psychical powers, say powers of healing, which have been attributed to particular persons were actually historical, they must have been supernatural. It would seem, however, more correct to say that if they were historical then the natural endowment of man is more rich and diversified than had been imagined before those powers were recognized."

of the legendary theory, had said: "The power of Jesus to work miracles must be considered only as a higher kind of natural force, a healing power which, even if not met with elsewhere, lies within the sphere of human nature." Mr. J. M. Thompson, the author of a revolutionary work on the "*Miracles of the New Testament*," which created some stir in England ten years ago, says of Christ's healing power (p.40): "There is probably not one of the cures (narrated in St. Mark) which is not explicable, or if we knew the original facts would not be explicable as an instance of Faith-healing."

"La foi qui guérit" of Charcot has been developed till it is put forward as the final explanation of all the Gospel cures. We may note the sceptical parenthesis "*if we knew the original facts*." This is evidently introduced because the greater number of Christ's cures as narrated in the Gospels are different in *kind*, and not merely in *degree* to the cures of "faith-healers." A faith-healer's suggestive cures are only sudden in cases where functions are restored that have been lost through some nervous or mental cause, and when there is no organic disease present as the cause of the functional disability. Psycho-therapy can, at best, only help to the *gradual* restoration of decayed organic tissue. The cures wrought by Christ were not solely the cure of nervous complaints. They are not paralleled by the cures of blindness, deafness, or paralysis due to "Shell-shock." Nothing that we are learning in modern psycho-therapy is even approaching the *quasi-creative* cures worked by Christ; nor is there any valid reason for thinking that we shall ever be able by suggestive methods to produce even colourable imitations of the majority of the Gospel miracles. With regard to the results obtained by suggestive treatment, the following testimony may be of interest. Dr. H. G. Gordon Mackenzie, in a paper contributed to "Medicine and the Church" (edited by G. Rhodes, London, 1909) gives an account of the discussion held by the Harveian Society in October, 1909, as to the results obtained by psycho-therapy. Summing up the results arrived at, he says: "Here we have

grouped together the expression of the opinions of trained minds of responsible medical men. The differences are comparatively slight; the agreement remarkable. Not one of them (though in one case as many as 4,000 records are in his hands) claims to have cured what are usually called *organic* conditions."

Nor will human nature be able by its intrinsic will power to show that mastery over inanimate nature which Christ exercised in the stilling of the storm or walking on the waters or feeding of the multitudes. These are not manifestations of natural human powers. Dr. Leighton Parks encourages us to hope that as we develop a more perfect humanity, and become more Christ-like, we shall share His "natural" human power over sickness and over nature; He writes: "It may be that the days will come when it shall seem to be as natural to walk on the waters or to multiply loaves and fishes, as it now seems to heal the sick in the way the Gospel declares that they were healed in the day of Jesus. But that will be to eliminate miracles not by denying them, but by understanding them."¹ Such anticipations are without the slightest foundation in observed fact².

The miracles of the Virgin Birth, which preceded the

¹ "What is Modernism?" p. 25. Le Roy and others would give spirit almost unlimited control over matter as a *natural* power. "Un miracle, c'est l'acte d'un esprit individuel (ou d'un groupe d'esprits individuels) agissant comme esprit à un degré plus haut que d'habitude, retrouvant en fait, et comme dans un éclair, sa puissance de droit" (Essai sur la notion du Miracle III, p. 242). Readers of Fogazzaro's "Il Santo" will remember Benedetto's explanation of the cure of the girl as a purely natural process, when he was disclaiming on his own behalf any of the powers of a real thaumaturge.

² The "constructive imagination" of Modernist critics is called out to build up an explanation of the acceptance of belief in the Resurrection, although, according to the critics, it never took place. Renan's explanation is that the weeping Magdalen saw the gardener and mistook him for Christ and then ran off to tell the good news to the Apostles. "Divine might of love," he writes, "moments for ever sacred, when the passion of an hysterical woman gave to the world a risen God" (Vie de Jésus, p. 391). Surely Renan's imagination here is sadly uncritical. Were the Apostles likely to believe such a story? Their contempt for the women's tales of the Resurrection only gave place to belief and joy when they themselves had seen and touched and spoken to the Saviour and seen the marks of His wounds in His risen Body.

development of the perfect humanity of Our Lord, and of the Bodily Resurrection, after death had dissolved that humanity, being outside such naturalistic explanation, are denied to be historical facts. Modernists tell us they never happened, and so need not be explained! These miracles, though clearly stated in the creeds, cannot be part of the faith of Modernists, and we saw in our first lecture how a little casuistic device has enabled them to affirm the Creeds "*ex animo*" and "*honestly*," though they disbelieve what the words of the Creeds clearly express.

We have only space to mention one result of this disbelief in miracles. It is a practical return to a Deistic view of God.

Dr. Kirsopp Lake says that the Church of the future will omit from its worship the use of prayers of petition, the asking of favours and blessings from God. He says: "That the religion of to-morrow will have prayer, I do not doubt, unless the Churches should be so foolish as to insist that prayer must include petition. . . . For I do not believe that the religion of to-morrow will have any more place for petition than it will have for any other form of magic." So the "Lord's Prayer" must be jettisoned with the rest, for it is a "prayer of petition," and hence involves an appeal to magic! Unless, indeed, such prayers may possibly be retained for their *auto-suggestive* value when we pray for grace to resist temptation, or for their *telepathic* efficacy when we pray for such graces for others, or their *psycho-therapeutic* effects when we pray to be cured of sickness in our own case or give our friends the benefit of "absent treatment" in their maladies¹ Modern psychology would claim utility for such prayers, even were there no God to hear them!

I have kept to the last one most important consideration. What did Christ Himself believe about His miracles? There are not many Modernists who would go as far as Dr. Kirsopp Lake, who tells us that the Church of the future will not be tied to any view about Christ "not even His own." Christ clearly

¹ See *Atlantic Monthly*, August, 1924.

believed that He was exercising powers that were more than human when He worked His miracles, and He confidently appeals to His "Works" and "Signs" to prove to the Jews that He was their Messiah, the Son of God, exercising the divine prerogative of forgiving sin and proving that He had that right by His power to cure all the sick who were brought to Him. "Who can forgive sins but God alone?" urged His enemies. They were scandalized at the apparent blasphemy involved in His words to the paralytic "Thy sins are forgiven thee." Christ promptly cured the man as a sign and a proof that He possessed in His own Person the divine power of forgiveness.

Is it conceivable that Christ was ignorant of the true nature of the powers He exercised? Or do Modernists accuse Him of "bluffing" the ignorant bystanders by an exercise of purely human power which He pretended was more than human? One who reads the Gospels without prejudice sees in every page of them that miracles were one of the most effective means employed by Christ to prove to His hearers that He was their Messiah, performing the divine works and giving the "signs" that Isaiah had foretold. "Go and tell John what ye have heard and seen. The blind see, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the dead arise, the poor have the Gospel preached to them." (Matt. xi.) This was the reply made to the messengers from the Baptist who asked if He was the One that was foretold. Again, He says, "If I do not the works of My Father, believe Me not. But if I do them and ye will not believe Me, believe the works themselves that ye may know and believe that the Father is in Me, and I in the Father" (John x. 26). And again: "If I had not done among them the works which no other man did, they had not had sin." (John xv. 24). Miracles are on nearly every page of the Gospel. They cannot be regarded as something accidental, something that can be omitted without doing essential damage to revelation. They not only authenticate the message, but they are part of that message. The author of "Ecce Homo," said truly: "Miracles play

so important a part in Christ's scheme that any theory which would represent them as entirely due to the imagination of His followers or of a later age destroys the credibility of the documents, not partially, but wholly, and leaves Christ a personage as mythical as Hercules." The theory that would make the miracles due to purely natural powers, would have a like effect.

And here I end. What then in a few words is the message of Modernism? It is this: the Creeds are incredible; Christ is a mere creature—a merely human and non-miraculous person; the Virgin Birth and Bodily Resurrection never took place, nor has there ever in the whole of human history been a real supernatural miracle.

Who, then, is the Christ of Modernism? Is He not perhaps, after all the real Anti-Christ of the prophecies, the clever creation of Satan making a supreme effort to rob mankind of its belief in the true, adorable, Incarnate Son of God?

"Little children . . . even now many Anti-Christes have come into being. . . . They went out from among us, yet they were not from among us; for had they been from among us, they would have remained with us. . . . Who is the Liar, if not he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is Antichrist—he that denies the Father, and the Son. Every one who denies the Son, hath not the Father either." (1 John, ii.)

"Beloved do not trust every spirit, but test the spirits, if they are from God, because many false prophets have come into the world. . . . Every spirit that acknowledges Jesus Christ Incarnate is from God; and every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus (or divides Jesus) is not from God. And this is the spirit of Antichrist." (1 John, iv.)

Certainly any wide acceptance of the Christ of the critics will be a permanent barrier to the future reunion of Christendom in the Catholic Church. That Church is committed FOR EVER to the Christ of the Creeds, the Christ of the uncensored Gospels.

The Godhead of Christ, the Eternal Son of God, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, Who existed

before He came Incarnate and Who was still God as the Babe of Bethlehem, is the rock foundation of the Christian faith and the Catholic Church exists to teach that truth to-day.

No man has a right to the name Christian who gives the extreme Modernist answer to the question: "What think ye of Christ? Whose Son is He?"

If asked. Is Modernism Christian? I unhesitatingly reply: "No. Unitarian if you will, *but not Christian*." ¹

¹ On the subject of Miracles, see *Miracles*, by George Joyce, S.J. (Burns Oates & Washbourne).

The author recommends those of his readers who wish for a complete and scholarly treatise on Modernism to obtain "Christ and the Critics" by Felder, 2 Vols. (Burns Oates & Washbourne, 25/-).

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"Constantinople, Canterbury and Rome," by the author of these lectures, is a companion volume of Farm Street addresses on the Anglo-Catholic theory of the Church, in reply to Bishop Gore's "Catholicism and Roman Catholicism." (Longmans. 2s. 6d. paper, 3s. 6d. cloth.)

CONCLUDING CHAPTER

THE PROBLEM AND THE PROSPECTS OF CHRISTIAN REUNION¹

WHEN Bishop Gore wrote "If anything is certain, it is certain that visible unity in the Church of His disciples was the will of Christ. If so, to a horrifying extent we have departed from His will,"² he stated a truth and made an admission that should be a preliminary condition of, if not a real step towards, the return of dissident Christianity to Catholic union. With him, most of the Christian bodies are agreed that visible unity in His Church was and still is the will of Christ. All who call themselves Christians would welcome such manifest unity if it could be brought about without any sacrifice of conscientious convictions. "Mala fides" and external union would be a poor substitute for "bona fides" and the lack of intercommunion. The end, desirable in itself, would not justify compromise on matters that men regard as articles of revealed doctrine, even though their views are mistaken. Nor would it justify any artificial and insincere external unity such as might be purchased at the price of subscription to formulas designed to admit of different and even contradictory interpretations. Unity secured by the acceptance of such principles might increase the number of "united" churchmen, but it would only be brought about through the destruction of the Catholic Church. And that, as we Catholics know, can never take place.

The League of Nations, it has been truly said, sadly needs a Soul. Christian civilization in its widest sense requires, for its own preservation and development, the general recognition by all Christians of that One Body designed by Christ to perpetuate His message,

¹The substance of an address delivered before the Nicene Society at Oxford. Portions of this chapter have appeared in *The Month*, and are printed here with the editor's permission.

²*Catholicism and Roman Catholicism*, p. 44.

so that a single conscience may guide its aims and actions. A united Church embracing in one organic whole all who use the Christian name would speak to the world with immensely increased power.

It will help to clear the issue if we state here the nature of the various divided elements which it is hoped one day to unite in the single organism of the Catholic Church, an organism which Christian theology proclaims to be animated by the Holy Spirit of Truth. Our view as to the prospects of such final union may depend on the clearness with which we visualize the *differentiæ* of the sects that it is proposed to unite in the Catholic Church.

In the world to-day there are two great bodies whose continuity with primitive Christianity is undisputed, one whose continuity is a matter of controversy, and a large group whose existence as distinct bodies admittedly began in the 16th century.

Let us briefly describe these societies :

(1) The Pope rules over a universalistic supra-national yet international society. His claims to supremacy and infallibility are admitted by more than 294,000,000 subjects.¹ The constitution of this Church in its essential form is part of her dogma. She "believes in herself" and insists on all her children accepting her own account of her origin, mission and constitution. She is essentially dogmatic and in consequence she is intolerant of scepticism in her disciples. She could never accept the Modernist theory of the use of Creeds without ceasing to be herself. It would be an act of suicide on her part to become "comprehensive" or tolerant as is the Anglican Church. A Catholic who expresses and clings to disbelief of any one of her defined doctrines is anathematized and excommunicated, for, in denying that doctrine, he denies the Church to be Christ's infallible messenger. To despise Her is to despise and reject the truthfulness of Her founder, Jesus Christ. Hence Her doctrines are not merely one or two "fundamentals," "central and few," as Dr. Gore says, but "*all* the things whatsoever

¹ The following figures and facts are borrowed from a recent address by the Professor of Ecclesiastical History at the Maximilian University, Munich.

(He) commanded her to teach." This body comprises about 48 per cent. of all the Christians in the world.

(2) "The Orthodox" is not a "unified" body, in the sense in which the Catholic Church is a body, but is split into over a dozen national Churches resembling each other in doctrine and ritual. Each Church is independent and autocephalous. The Patriarch of Constantinople is hardly a chairman, certainly in no sense the "head," of the Eastern group, for he has no authority to teach or govern outside his own Church. Hence the various Eastern Orthodox Churches are individualistic, national and, as the testimony of history proclaims them to be, extremely Erastian, with all the abuses and failings that Erastianism connotes. There are about 136,000,000 "orthodox" Christians making up about 22 per cent of Christendom.

Both the Papal Church and the Orthodox have, however, the same basic conception of the Church: they believe it to be a *visible* society divinely instituted and taught by the Spirit of God. Both cling to the sacrificial priesthood and episcopate as of divine institution and as essential to the Church's constitution. With the exception of the doctrine of Papal supremacy and the Procession of the Holy Ghost, both are practically agreed in their teaching. Of the two, the Orthodox is perhaps the more conservative, regarding the further definitions of the Councils held after the schism as heretical innovations and rejecting the development of doctrine as understood by Rome. Each of the two proclaims itself to be the *whole* Church of Christ and each repudiates the claim of the other to be Catholic.

(3) Between these two and the group of Nonconformist Protestants we may place, for purposes of classification, the Anglican Church. It approximates to the first group in that it holds that the Church must be a visible organization having the hierarchy as part of its essence. This characteristic is sometimes described as the "Catholic" aspect of Anglicanism. But when Bishop Gore speaks of the English Church as a "liberal Catholic" Church, he stresses her resemblance to the other group, for he recognizes that her "liberalism" consists in the absence of inquisition

into the faith of the individual members of the Church. Her ministers, it is true, are obliged to subscribe to a formula of faith, the 39 Articles, but such subscription has long ceased to be any indication of the doctrines held or preached by Anglican ministers. Her pulpits are found to be occupied equally by men who teach the Catholic catechism minus the Papal claims and by men of the extreme modernist type who teach an utterly different Christianity, hardly distinguishable from Arianism. There is no claim to infallibility in Anglican teaching. "Anglo-Catholics" propound a kind of "branch" theory of the Church, but both Rome and Constantinople agree in rejecting that novel conception of Catholicism. Taking 26,000,000 as its membership, it is $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of Christendom, but it is not possible to say exactly what part of this $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. belongs to each of the three parties in the Church.

(4) The fourth great division in Christendom is the "Reformed" group of Churches. Its members for the most part deny the visibility of the Church. The private interpretation of the written word of God is the common source of its varied Faith. It denies the episcopate as of Divine institution and generally rejects the "priestly" idea. The subjective element necessarily predominates in its determination of its faith and the multiplication of its sects is the natural result. There were over 200 Nonconformist sects in England in 1890 and 235 in Germany in 1907. When the "World Mission Conference" assembled at Edinburgh in 1910, 160 Protestant sects were represented at the meeting. There are about 100,000,000 members of these Protestant Reformed sects (16 per cent. of Christendom). To them must be added the 60,000,000 Lutherans (10 per cent.) who most closely resemble the Presbyterians in type.

The task of uniting these Christian bodies into a single corporation is one that seems hopeless, inasmuch as every approach by Anglicans to Nonconformity is a step away from Rome and the Orthodox, and every approach towards Constantinople and Rome increases the distance from the avowed fundamental Protestantism of the sects. Protestantism would have to

sacrifice itself and nearly all it stands for before it could unite with those against whom it was born to protest.

Then, the unchanging intransigence of Rome stands in the way of reunion. But if Rome were to abandon her divine dogmatism she would cease to be Rome, and there would be left upon earth no Church of Christ claiming to teach to-day with His infallible authority. Consequently we cannot be surprised that all efforts at uniting Christendom have so far effected nothing substantial.

The "World Conference on Faith and Order" assembled at Geneva in 1920, shortly after the 6th Lambeth Conference, which had brought together 254 English and American bishops. At the Geneva Conference 137 delegates representing 40 nations, sat under the presidency of Bishop Brent of New York. There were present five representatives of the Orthodox Church. The Conference only revealed and emphasized the deepest contrasts with regard to the theory of Church constitution between these various bodies. Bishop Gore, who was present and whose personality preponderated in the discussions, admitted at the close of the Conference that a careful and exact discussion of the *real* problem, viz., the Episcopate, was yet to be made. A continuation committee of 53 members was appointed to prepare for the next "World Conference" which is to assemble at Washington,¹ but one needs no abnormal prophetic gift to be able to forecast that the conclusions of the Conference when it takes place in 1927 will be but a "reinforced echo" of the Geneva Conference of 1920.

Most of the leading Orthodox, with certain notable exceptions, see no prospect of union with Anglicans

¹ If, as it is hoped, the Vatican Council reassembles at Rome in the same year the contrast between the two will be very interesting. At Rome some 1,200 bishops from every part of the world, including Eastern Uniates, will be seen to hold identically the same faith and will loyally and gladly admit their subordination to the same Visible Head whom they believe to be the successor in the See and heir to the prerogatives of St. Peter. Their "stability" will be seen to be due to this—they rest on the "Rock-man" foundation laid by Christ. Not to Modernists, but to Anglo-Catholics who believe in the Omniscience of Our Saviour, do I put the question: Would Christ have said the words of the "Petrine Texts"—with the knowledge of all that would be built upon them, had He not intended the meaning that Rome has ever found in the words to Peter?

because of concessions offered by the Anglican delegates to Nonconformity. The Russian Archbishop Antonyi of Kiew expressed the view of most Orthodox theologians when he said: "The only possible form of union among Churches is dogmatic union, nay, complete dogmatic union. This is only possible through the return to the bosom of the Orthodox, that is, the only true Church." Substitute "Rome" for "Orthodox" and you have the same uncompromising proclamation which is made by the Pope to the divided sects throughout the world. The Episcopate is an insurmountable barrier to Nonconformists and the complete dogmatic agreement demanded by both Rome and the Orthodox bars the way to Anglicans.

Let us now turn to the particular point of the prospects of union between Canterbury and Constantinople. Readers of the *Church Times* have had this held before them as a possibility, nay, even as an event probably not very far distant if things continue to move in the direction in which, according to that sanguine paper, they seem to have set. The recent acceptance of the validity of Anglican orders by the autonomous Churches of Constantinople, Jerusalem, and Cyprus is regarded as of good omen for the much more important step of intercommunion between Anglicans and the Orthodox. This recognition of their Orders is described by the *Church Times* as "only a preliminary step to ultimate reunion, as all sincere Christians hope and pray; but it is a very important one."¹ *Church Times* readers are reminded that "indiscriminate intercommunion is not rightly possible until the two Churches have proclaimed an act of dogmatic agreement."² This need of previous dogmatic agreement was noted carefully by the Patriarch Cyril

¹ *Church Times*, May 18th, 1923.

² The following quotation from "English Catholicism of the See of Rome," a pamphlet by the Rev. F. Hood, Librarian of Pusey House, takes an even more optimistic view of the prospects of reunion all round through Anglo-Catholicism. "I believe that the greatest hope for this generation lies in the reunion of non-papal Catholics throughout the world. Perhaps it is not an exaggeration to say that this is already in sight. When that is an accomplished fact we shall be in a far stronger position to treat with the great patriarch of Western Europe; and we hope and pray that ultimate reunion will be reached on the basis of a constitutional papacy."

of Cyprus in the very communication which announced his acceptance of the validity of Anglican Orders. It had previously been insisted on in the Report of the Delegates from Constantinople who were invited over to England at the time of the Lambeth Conference of 1920.

If only the Anglo-Catholic "Declaration of Faith," which, we are told by the Secretary of the English Church Union, was placed in the hands of each member of the Synod of Constantinople at the time of its deliberations on Anglican Orders, were really an expression of the common faith of English Churchmen and faithfully rendered the meaning of the official formularies of the Anglican Church, this "act of dogmatic agreement" might conceivably take place. But—in the words of the Anglican Bishop of Durham—"that declaration is not only destitute of any authority but conflicts sharply with the official doctrinal standards of the Church of England."¹

Most disinterested witnesses would be likely to agree with the Bishop in saying, "The whole spirit and drift of that statement are quite out of harmony with the English formularies."

Let me remind the reader of the chief headings of their "Declaration of the Faith of the English Church," presented to the delegates from Constantinople.

It fairly represents the standpoint of extreme Anglo-Catholicism, though nobody could assert that it describes normal Anglicanism. Possibly the line of thought in which the "Declaration" originated was this: The Anglican Church is part of the Catholic Church and so its doctrines *must* be those of the "undivided Church," i.e., those truths taught both by Rome and the Orthodox East. One who merely knew the Anglican formularies could never have framed the "Declaration" doctrines from a study of these formularies.

"Notwithstanding individual departures from the Faith of the undivided Church of Christ in the Scriptures, handed down by the Holy Fathers and traditions of the Church, re-affirmed and safeguarded by Œcumenical Councils, this faith has not been forsaken by the

¹ *Edinburgh Review*, April, 1923, p. 129.

English Church." They enumerate the seven Sacraments and say—"We adhere to the custom of calling these seven rites specifically sacraments." They claim to have apostolic orders—"With the purpose that we should offer the unbloody Sacrifice of the Eucharist for both the living and the departed," and "sacramentally absolve sinners who repent and confess their sins . . . We hold that by consecration in the Eucharist, the bread and wine . . . are changed and become the true Body and true Blood of Christ. We hold that Christ thus present is to be adored."

Honour to Our Lady and the Saints and prayers addressed to them, the use of sacred images and prayers for the dead are other doctrines and practices of devotion which they put forward as doctrines and practices of the Church of England. They add: "We account the 39 Articles of Religion as a document of secondary importance concerned with local controversies of the 16th century and to be interpreted in accordance with the Faith of the Universal Church of which the English Church is but a part."

Bishop Gore, who retired some years ago from the See of Oxford, was the only signatory of Episcopal rank. At the time of the 1923 Anglo-Catholic Congress, the Congress Secretary declared that his card index held the names of 4251 parochial incumbents in sympathy with the Anglo-Catholic movement. Yet the party has to be content to be officially inarticulate: official Anglicanism merely tolerates it and is very far from endorsing its views. I doubt if any Bishop ruling an English See, believes and teaches what is taught habitually from the pulpits of "extreme" Anglo-Catholic churches.¹

On the other hand, Evangelicalism and Modernism have every right to speak officially for the Church of England, inasmuch as they are strongly represented among that Episcopal body with which alone both Rome and the Orthodox would naturally deal if the matter of corporate unity ever came to be discussed

¹ A statistical fact of interest is that according to the E.C.U. "Guide for Tourists," 181 Anglican churches in London have Confessions heard at fixed times. In England, Wales and Scotland there appear to be 1,070 such churches.

officially between the Churches. This the shrewd Easterns know very well. Let us recall the definite attitude taken up by the Orthodox representatives in their Report¹ to the Synod of Constantinople after conferring with the Anglican Bishops at the Lambeth Conference of 1920, and studying the friendly advances of the latter to English Nonconformity. They tell the Anglicans in plain terms that before re-union can take place the Anglican Church must be other than it is. And thus the practical question arises as to whether the Anglo-Catholic party can so completely transform the Church of England as to bring it into line with Orthodox requirements.

"While with us the true member of the Church, who continues in organic union with the whole, must accept the whole of our teaching, share canonically in the Holy Sacraments and believe in lawfully settled ecclesiastical principles: in the English Church, men differing from each other in faith, not in things indifferent and non-essential, constitute one undivided whole. To however great an extent, in conformity with our mission, we were inspired with the most friendly feelings and the warmest zeal for a new approach, we *could not agree to views of such a nature without abandoning the foundation on which our Church is built*" (Official Report, p. 11).

They thought "it would not be offensive to propose the general abolition of the 39 Articles," but recognizing that these Articles are embodied in an Act of Parliament, and that until, disestablishment, only a revision of them is possible, they declare "This revision being *invested with a competent authority* would evidently supply in great measure the place of a final abolition of the Articles" (*Ibid.* p. 13.)

With regard to these demands, the *Church Times*² said in a leader criticizing a book³ which deduced from them the conclusion that re-union with the East is at present and for many years to come quite outside

¹ A masterly dissection of this Report and a clear exposition of its significance by the Rev. J. V. McNabb, O.P., appears in *Blackfriars*, August, 1922.

² April 6th, 1923.

³ "Constantinople, Canterbury and Rome" (Longmans)

practical politics! "There is nothing whatever in the first . . . the Orthodox doctrine of the Church, and very little in the third, the 39 Articles."

Yet it does seem that much has to be accomplished by Anglo-Catholics before the "Church of England" should "accept the whole of Orthodox teaching," and it will be long before Parliament will pass a law by which the 39 Articles shall be abolished or at least "revised" to express that teaching. To attempt to get their "Declaration of Faith" accepted as the official creed of the Establishment would be, for Anglo-Catholics, to attempt the impossible, until they have won over both Modernists and Evangelicals to full Catholic truth as they understand it.

Evangelicals are not prepared to give up their right of private judgment, to accept a true propitiatory sacrifice of the Mass, a Real Presence following on a real change in the bread and wine after consecration, and prayers for the dead and to Our Lady and the Saints. Nor would they give up their rooted objection to sacred images to please the Orthodox and win inter-communion with them. They have a conscientious objection to these doctrines and practices.

Nor will the Modernists be prepared to go back to the old idea of a Creed as a formula expressing what one really believes. They are not prepared to part with their "perfectly human non-miraculous Christ," a Christ who only claimed to be God's son "in the moral sense in which all human beings are sons of God." They will be unwilling to exchange their disbelief in the Virgin Birth and the Bodily Resurrection of Christ for the Orthodox and Catholic faith in these foundation-miracles of Christianity, for they prize their rationalistic freedom of thought more than any inter-communion with the old Churches. The Modernist believes himself to be more primitive than Rome or the Eastern Churches and he thinks and speaks of himself as the only one who really knows the truth about Christ. Modernism, rampant and unrebuked in the Church of England, cannot escape the notice of the Orthodox and it is clearly noted by Rome. "Orthodoxy" must cease to be prized by the East; before the Orthodox can ally themselves with a Church

which, in practice, tolerates denial of the doctrines of the "Creeds of the Councils."

Hence, we conclude that the Anglo-Catholic hope of union with the Orthodox Church is doomed to failure. The Orthodox are too proud of their title to ally themselves with those who nourish the Arian heresy in their bosom.

We may further observe that corporate union, *vi verborum*, must take place between Churches as complete bodily entities, not between fractions or parties in the Churches. Before joining the Orthodox, the Anglo-Catholics would have to secede from the Establishment and isolate themselves from the Modernism and "Protestantism" which they very properly repudiate. Thus, in spite of the suavity and politeness of the Orthodox, real communion with the East—like communion with Rome—would only be obtainable by renouncing communion with heretics and acceding to the full doctrinal demands of the Orthodox Church.

But there is a group of Anglo-Catholics who look rather towards what they consider as the real Mother of their Church—the Church of Rome. They feel quite rightly that a Western Church tacked on to an Eastern Patriarchate, or even an Anglican Patriarchate out of communion with the rest of Western Christendom, would be an anomaly. Rome demands more, but it has more to give than has the East. She demands the recognition of the Papal claims. She can give communion with Catholics all over the wide world who welcome all to brotherhood who accept the same "Holy Father" as Christ's representative on earth. There is, alas! no more immediate prospect of a return of the English people to its old allegiance to the Pope in any corporate way than there is prospect of corporate union between the Established Church and the East.

Meanwhile each individual Anglo-Catholic has his soul to save by following the guidance of his own judgment until, by God's grace, it puts him in touch with that Divine Teacher which is still to be found on earth if the promises of Christ have been fulfilled. Bishop Gore's rebuke may hold some back. "Hlave you a right," he asks,¹ "by an act of

¹ "Catholicism and Roman Catholicism," Sec. III.

your private judgment, to prefer the Roman argument to the argument against the exclusive claims of Rome, which seems to some of the best and wisest men to be conclusive." Anglicans have not only a right but a duty to follow their private judgment in this matter, for neither Bishop Gore nor their own Church claims to be their infallible guide to the Truth of Christ. As Bishop Gore tells them elsewhere, "free-thinking" is a duty in their case. But once they find that infallible guide they will rightly and gladly permit her to do for them what she has done for Catholics in every era of the Christian age. She will *teach* them and, listening confidently to Her, they will hear the voice of Him who said "He that heareth you heareth me."

The hope of corporate unity at some future time with the Catholic Church whose centre is at Rome has kept Anglicans in the past from individual submission, and is keeping back many to-day. It is only charitable to state and restate the fact that union means entire acceptance of the doctrine and authority of the Church of St. Peter. Whether concessions might be made in such matters as a vernacular liturgy or a married clergy may be lawfully discussed; but whether to secure unity Rome would abate one jot of her defined doctrine or derogate from the universal jurisdiction of her supreme Pastor, is wholly beyond the range of discussion. To wait for Rome "to be other than she is," is in view of this fact to trifle with grace. This is with regard to those who see clearly that the claims of the Papacy are well founded.

But the majority of sincere Anglicans have not seen this truth about the Papacy in God's plan, and remain in a *bona fide* conviction of the Catholicity of their Church. God seems to bless their goodwill with many and great graces, which enable them, I believe, to lead sincere devout lives. They would seem to be numbered among the real lovers of Christ who hate sin, and are included in the invisible "Soul" of His Church. I dare not, nor would I wish to think otherwise, remembering the words: "Judge not, that ye be not judged." The distribution of God's graces is a Divine mystery, but Catholic theology is clear that the grace to love God—divine Charity—

is inseparably joined to that sanctifying grace which admits to Heaven and Eternal Salvation.

It is the certainty that no one can reach the Church from without except by a special grace of faith, given to bring into focus the facts of history and the meaning of Our Lord's words and revealing their providential co-ordination, along with my conviction of the perfect sincerity of Anglo-Catholics, that makes it possible for me to write and speak as I have done in these lectures, and still keep my deep affection and esteem for them. I differ profoundly from them and yet I do not judge them for failing to agree with me. "Non in dialectica" but by God's grace alone can we be brought together in the "One Faith."

Let us then join in begging Christ Himself to plead once again for Christian Unity on earth in the words He used the night before He suffered, after He had given His Church the Great Sacrament of Union, His Abiding Eucharistic Presence. The sight of the schisms to come through the sins of men, the prophetic view of whole peoples torn from His mystical Body, the Church, was part—perhaps the greatest part—of the Agony of Soul that came on Him that night beneath the olive trees in Gethsemane.

"Not for them only (my apostles and disciples) do I pray, but for them also who through their word shall believe in Me: that they may all be one, as Thou Father in Me and I in Thee; that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me. . . . I in them and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in unity, that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me, and hast loved them, as Thou hast also loved Me." —JOHN xvii.

"Other sheep I have that are not of this fold: them also must I bring, and they shall hear my voice and there shall be one Fold (Rev. v. 'one flock') and one Shepherd." —JOHN x. 16.

May the prayer of Christ avail to work this miracle in divided Christendom. May the grace of God which in the childhood of the Church won a pagan world to Christianity, be given again to-day to the separated sects to make them truly Catholic.

FEAST OF THE ANNUNCIATION,

March 25th, 1925.

The author published, in *The Times* of December 29th, 1923, the following letter of comment on the interest aroused by the first public announcement of the "Malines Conversations," made by the Archbishop of Canterbury, in his New Year's letter. The last sentence of a letter in the same issue from Sir R. W. Perks, speaking on behalf of Methodists, is fairly representative of the Free Church reception of the Archbishop's letter. It ran: "I am convinced that there are few—if any—Methodists to-day who would desire any form of union whatever with the Church of England if such union involved or paved the way for union with the Church of Rome."

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES

SIR,—The Archbishop of Canterbury's review of the progress made towards the reunion of Christendom will have been read with the deepest interest by all who have this cause at heart, and not less by Roman Catholics than by others. Perhaps the portion of His Grace's letter which will arouse most comment is the latter part dealing with the recent approaches to Rome. For my part, I believe that the most hopeful lines in the letter are those in the footnote in which the Archbishop reminds us that Lord Halifax's views as to the divine origin of the Primacy of St. Peter and his successors, the Popes, are not shared by the delegates who accompanied him to the conferences with Cardinal Mercier at Malines a few weeks ago.

The fiasco which caused such disillusionment, disappointment, and bitterness in 1895 and 1896 could have been avoided, had a group of men more representative of average Anglicanism accompanied Lord Halifax when he visited the French ecclesiastics and spoke to them of the readiness of the English Church for corporate reunion. Leo XIII was misled by these foreigners into the idea that the Church of England only needed a word of kindly welcome and encouragement from the Chief Pastor to ensure its immediate return to the fold. Over-emphasis of the Catholic beliefs of "Anglo-Catholics," and the impression that their standpoint was that of the Anglican Episcopate and of the main body of Anglicans, had led the Pope to the point of preparing a letter to His Grace's predecessor and the Anglican Episcopate welcoming their submission and admitting them to communion with the Holy See.

Cardinal Gasquet, in his "Leaves from my Diary," describes the dramatic interview between Leo XIII and Cardinal Vaughan, whom he had summoned from England. The Pope reproved the Cardinal for his want of sympathy with the Established Church and informed him that Anglicans were, he was told, ready to come over in a body to Rome. It was from the Archbishop of Westminster that the Pope learned how he had been misled by the French Abbé's account and how nearly he had made the *faux pas* of writing to welcome a submission that no Anglican bishop thought for a moment of tendering. When Cardinal Vaughan explained that the papal supremacy and infallibility were not doctrines that the Archbishop of Canterbury and his colleagues on the bench would be prepared to admit, the Pope threw up his hands and exclaimed: "Ma questa é una questione di dottrina." Needless to say, the letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury was never written.

"Una questione di dottrina." Here we have the real obstacle to Christian reunion, yet one which is being continually shelved. It has been said that the Anglican Church is destined to be the link between the extremes in this task of reuniting Christendom. While admitting that it can "open parleys" more easily than any

other Christian body, as it is able to select, tactfully, representatives whose belief is less removed from the faith of the denomination that is being approached, it is doubtful if these conferences can ever effect substantial results as long as they refuse to lay on the table the points of disagreement while emphasizing the common beliefs. No real union between Anglicanism and Nonconformity can be effected in doctrine unless both parties agree that the creed of the combined bodies, after reunion, is only to consist of the highest common factor of the beliefs of the bodies to be united. This might be a basis of reunion some day—but not to-day.

With regard to the East, it is not inconceivable that—again some day, but not to-day—an extension of the handy principle vaguely described as “economy,” might enable it to overlook the doctrinal comprehensiveness of Anglicanism, and admit the Church of England to the confederation of autocephalous Churches known as “the Orthodox.” But the East is very conservative, and such a step would not seem to be consistent with the title it is so proud of, if Anglicanism and Nonconformity should have come to an agreement on the lines indicated above.

With regard to Rome, the matter stands on quite another footing. No compromise on any defined dogma can even be considered as a means of facilitating the return, even were it of all the Christian sects reunited in one Protestant Church which had secured, let us imagine, communion with the East. Leo XIII seemed prepared to make very wide disciplinary concessions to the Anglican Church which was represented as waiting to be admitted to the fold. But his hands went up, and his *non possumus* was expressed in the exclamation: “Ma questa é una questione di dottrina!” It seems that the mentality involved in a Roman Catholic’s attitude towards the defined dogmas of his Church can never be realized by Anglicans. It is always swept aside as a species of “bluff,” and further attempts at negotiating a doctrinal concession are recommenced.

The writer believes that the cause of reunion would be really helped if every body of Anglican delegates to other religious bodies was made truly representative of Anglicanism by the inclusion of members representing all the chief parties in the Church. The representatives approaching Nonconformity should, he thinks, have included Lord Halifax and Bishop Gore; and Bishop Hensley Henson and Bishop Knox should have accompanied the group that went to Malines to confer with Cardinal Mercier. The conferences might have broken up sooner; but they would not have accomplished less.



The only union that is practicable is a genuine sympathetic co-operation of all Christian bodies in the work of social reconstruction. A sincere conviction of the *bona fides* of those who reject our personal beliefs and cling to those we reject ought to enable us to work like brothers for the healing of the wounds of the world. We can co-operate heartily in . . . works for social reconstruction; and mutual understanding will prevent our unwittingly wounding the susceptibilities of those from whom we differ on points of doctrine. It is narrow-minded doubt as to the *bona fides* of those who differ from us that so often has killed the mutual charity which should be the ever-present bond of union, even in a disunited Christendom.

Yours truly,

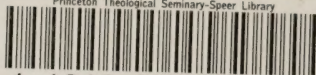
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